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HISTORY  
OF THE  
FIRST REFORMED CHURCH  
OF CANTON, OHIO

— BY —  
REV. THEODORE F. BOLLIGER

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History of the First  
Reformed Church, Canton,  
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**FIRST REFORMED CHURCH  
OF CANTON, OHIO**









FIRST REFORMED CHURCH  
*as remodeled and enlarged in 1898*

PARSONAGE  
*Built in 1890*

**HISTORY**  
**OF THE**  
**FIRST REFORMED CHURCH**  
**CANTON, OHIO**

**BY**  
**REV. THEODORE P. BOLLIGER**  
**PASTOR SINCE 1907**

**CENTRAL PUBLISHING HOUSE**  
**CLEVELAND, OHIO**

**TO THE MEMBERS OF THE FIRST CHURCH**

*whose graciousness has sustained me;*

**TO THE CONSISTORY**

*without whose helpfulness my pastoral activities*

*could not have prospered;*

**TO THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND ITS**

**FAITHFUL CORPS OF WORKERS**

*this volume is gratefully dedicated.*



## PREFACE.

THE First Reformed Church of Canton and its early pastors helped largely to make Reformed Church history in Ohio. The Church was in the midst of the problems, turmoils and movements of the last century. The author kept constantly before him a fourfold aim: First, to give the story of the humble beginnings and the growth of the First Church; secondly, to show the close relation between the First Church and the development of the Reformed Church in Stark County and beyond, through the congregations which were associated with it as a parish; thirdly, to sketch the religious movements and ecclesiastical battles in which the First Church took a leading part; fourthly, to indicate the conditions and the development of Canton from period to period.

The gathering of the material was fraught with great difficulties. The first church record, kept in common by the Reformed and Lutherans before 1829, disappeared long ago. The first record kept by the Reformed Church alone after 1829, contains only a list of the baptisms, and several lists of communicants and confirmations. The second record containing the account of the congregational meetings, dates back only to 1859. This record unfortunately is so brief and incomplete, that it does not even mention the lawsuit of the Lutherans against the Reformed, nor the fact that a new church was being erected. The facts had to be literally dug out from many mines.

The chief sources of information were the minutes of the synods, the classes, and various church organizations. All the minutes of the Eastern Synod from 1793-1830; the Ohio Classis from 1820-23; the Ohio Synod from 1824-1881; the Independent Synod of Ohio from 1846-1852; the Columbiana Classis; the North German Classis; the St. John's Classis; and the First Church and all its organizations, were examined page by page, and every piece of information that seemed of value was carefully copied out and used.

The second important sources of information were the histories of Stark County, the earliest newspapers published in Canton, and the earliest church papers of Ohio. The first twenty volumes of the oldest

German newspaper published in Canton, and the first forty volumes of the "Canton Repository," were examined column by column and all references to the Reformed Church utilized. In the same manner the oldest church papers published in Ohio, "Der Evangelist," "Die Kirchenzeitung," "The Western Missionary," and "The Christian World," as well as every issue of the "Almanac," were consulted. Especially valuable also were the books of Dr. J. G. Buettner for the period from 1830-45, and the "Reminiscences of Rev. Peter Herbruck." These reminiscences were prepared about 1875, at the request of Rev. H. J. Ruetenik, D.D., but had been so completely lost that neither Dr. Ruetenik nor the family of Rev. Herbruck knew that they were still in existence. From the writings of Dr. Buettner and Dr. Herbruck many of the most interesting incidents of this book have been gathered.

It yet remains for the author to express his indebtedness to those who gave assistance in the preparation of this volume: to George B. Frease, manager of the "Canton Repository" for permission to consult the early volumes of his newspaper; to Mrs. M. M. Herbst, the daughter of Peter Kaufman, one of the earliest publishers of a German newspaper in Canton, for the use of all the extant volumes; to Dr. James I. Good who freely offered rare books and helpful information; to the authorities of the Central Theological Seminary, Heidelberg College, Lancaster Theological Seminary and the Central Publishing House, for free access to old minute books, manuscripts and periodicals. Without this co-operation, the material for this volume could not have been gathered. Last of all, though not least to the author's heart, he desires to thank his dear friends and predecessors the Rev'd John B. Rust, Ph.D., D.D., and the Rev'd Frederick C. Nau for writing the story of their own pastorates.

A clearer understanding of the hard pioneer life of the fathers, of the struggles through which they passed, of the success and victories which they won, will put iron into the blood of the present generation, will stimulate loyalty, and arouse to better service. May this volume contribute somewhat to this desirable end.

T. P. B.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE EARLIEST DAYS

THE history of the First Reformed Church and of the city of Canton is closely interwoven. Both passed together through the hard, poverty-filled pioneer days; both entered together into a long period of slow growth and difficult problems; and both attained to the goal of prosperity and large influence.

It is difficult for the present generation, surrounded by comforts, conveniences, and opportunities constantly multiplying, to imagine the hardships and struggles of the early days. At the beginning of the last century, deep, dark forests stretched in almost unbroken continuity where now are found the fertile fields, rich orchards and smiling gardens of Stark County. The Indian war-whoop still frequently resounded in the forests and human blood often flecked with crimson the innocent grasses and bushes. Wolves, bears, panthers, deer and other wild animals still roamed the woods; game birds of every description abounded, and all the common fur-bearing animals such as muskrats, minks, beavers, and otter were freely caught. Then—about 1805—the white man came.

In 1805, Bezaleel Wells secured a tract of land about five miles square located about the forks of the Nimishillin which included the present location of Canton. The tract was surveyed and a site for a town selected and laid out in lots in 1806. During this year the first settlers arrived and the first cabins went up. After three years the number of inhabitants in Canton was only twenty-seven, though a considerable number of settlers had taken up land in the surrounding country. Canton was then the western boundary of civilization. The mail was brought in only once a week from New Lisbon. The Postoffice was a drawer behind the bar of a tavern located on the square.

The first settlers were able to carry but a few things into

the wilderness. Every convenience was lacking. Meal had to be ground by hand or was brought long distances on horse-back. The first iron stove was not brought in until about 1825. Before that cooking was generally done on the open fire. The teakettle hung on a crane; the skillet was set on the coals, potatoes were baked in the ashes and baking was done in rudely contrived ovens. Dishes were of pewter or, more likely, fashioned out of wood. The log-cabins consisted generally of a single room. Every inch of space was valuable, hence beds were built high so that the children's trundle-bed could be slipped underneath when not occupied. A tallow-candle, or the fire on the hearth, furnished the only light.

Though the Indians had given up all claim to the land east of the Tuscarawas River, it was still their custom to hunt and fish wherever fancy led them. They were also inveterate beggars, often appearing at lonely cabins, and by threatening means, securing what they wanted. The women and children especially were kept in constant fear. Preceding the war of 1812 with England, the Indians were in a restless, ugly mood, for England was following its ancient custom of stirring up the aborigines against the settlers. After this second war was over, the Indians rapidly removed farther to the west and northwest, and all Indian danger was over.

Amid such conditions the First Reformed Church of Canton had its origin. The early settlers for the greater part were Germans who had pushed out into the wilderness from Pennsylvania and Maryland. These were nearly all Reformed or Lutheran. But few were the possessions which could be carried to their new homes, but among these few a Bible, prayerbook, and often a hymnbook or a small volume of sermons was seldom lacking. During the first years the people were found but irregularly by a minister. Rev. John Staugh, a Lutheran minister, visited the new settlement and conducted a service as early as 1806. About the same time John Peter Mahnenschmidt, who was then serving several Reformed congregations in Washington County, Pennsylvania (southwest of Pittsburgh) also visited the people. Thereafter at long



intervals he would return and conduct services. In those days denominational barriers were not high nor menacing, and Reformed and Lutherans gladly met in one common service regardless of the denominational affiliations of the preacher. During the long intervals when no regular preacher was available, the faithful ones were accustomed to gather together and conduct an informal service among themselves. A hymn or two would be sung without organ or any other musical instrument, a prayer would be offered or more commonly read, and someone would read a sermon, followed perhaps by a free word of exhortation. With another hymn the service would be closed. One of the early pioneers testifies to the influence of these gatherings in these words, "Many of those who witnessed these religious exercises in the then wilderness cannot have forgotten the zeal, the good feeling, the solemnity that was apparent. God smiled graciously on the first settlers and conferred on them many and rich blessings while employed in rearing homes in these wilds." On his first visits to Ohio, Mr. Mahnenschmidt informs us, that he preached in houses, school-houses, little log-cabins, barns, and even under the green trees "greatly to the joy of the people."

The first regular place in which services were conducted was the barn of Michael Rieth. The name is spelled "Reed" in all the published histories of Stark County. This spelling is incorrect. Both the father and the children wrote the name "Rieth" as can be seen in certain documents on record at the County Courthouse. The Rieth family settled in Canton in 1810, but the land was bought earlier. Mr. Rieth owned the quarter section just north and west of Twelfth Street and Maple Avenue, N. E. He had a large barn built of logs with a spacious threshing floor. This floor served as the auditorium. The conveniences offered were not such as would please our soft and delicate age. The pews were simply rough slabs hauled in from the sawmill and laid on a log support. The pulpit was probably formed by a log of proper length tipped on end. There was always a scarcity of hymn-books, and the preacher was generally obliged to read the hymns line by line,

waiting between lines for the audience to sing what had been read. All classes and conditions of men attended. The services offered a welcome opportunity not only to satisfy their religious needs; but also to gratify their social instincts, and discuss financial and agricultural affairs. When the weather was too cold to hold services in this barn, private houses and the large room of a tavern were occasionally substituted. The services were conducted by Rev. Staugh and Mr. Mahnenschmidt as they had opportunity to visit our community. Some reminiscences of the first quarter century are worth preserving. In summertime the smaller boys and girls generally went to meeting barefooted. The youth of both sexes, however, desiring to make a more genteel appearance, would frequently carry their shoes and stockings along, slip into them just before reaching the meeting-place, and just as promptly slip them off again when the congregation scattered.

As John Peter Mahnenschmidt was the first Reformed preacher who conducted services in Canton, and since he gathered together the scattered Reformed believers and organized them into a congregation which still stands as a monument to his zeal and fidelity, and is counted today as the third oldest Reformed congregation in the State of Ohio; it is fitting that this chapter should close with a brief sketch of his career.

John Peter Mahnenschmidt was the third Reformed minister to settle permanently in the State of Ohio. He was born in western Pennsylvania in 1783. The place and county are no longer known. His father was a pious schoolmaster. From him the son early learned to love righteousness and hate iniquity and to dedicate his life to the service of God. After thorough instruction in the Bible and the Catechism he was confirmed when about sixteen. Until eighteen years of age John Peter worked for his father at home. After that we find him making his own way through life. In the summer he worked as day-laborer, during the winter he taught school in Somerset and Washington counties in south-western Pennsylvania. During this time he became very active religiously. Wherever he lived he at once gathered the believers together in regular

meetings for prayer and the development of the spiritual life. Truly devoted to God himself, he never wearied in seeking out others and urging them to repentance; and the Lord largely blessed his efforts. The people strongly urged him to give himself to the work of the ministry, but he shrank from the thought under a deep sense of his own unworthiness. The struggle that ensued caused him great anxiety and many tears.

About this time while teaching school in Somerset County, a death occurred in the neighborhood. As no minister was available, he was earnestly solicited to hold a funeral service. Though filled with fear and misgivings he finally consented, and conducted a service which gave great satisfaction. Nevertheless he still hesitated to decide for the sacred calling of the ministry. He was then nineteen years old.

Shortly after he went to Washington County to teach school. The Reformed minister of the community having died, the people soon urged him so earnestly to become their pastor that finally he consented and began to serve them regularly about 1806, when twenty-three years of age. The struggle to make the final decision had thus extended over a period of four years. These congregations in Washington County were served from 1806-11.

In those early pioneer days, ecclesiastical affairs were not conducted in that orderly and regular way to which we are now accustomed. Church discipline and Church laws were little known. So it came to pass that Mr. Mahnenschmidt, zealous and devoted though he was, fell into the grave irregularity of beginning his ministry before being licensed by the synod to preach or having been ordained as a minister. He performed the usual ministerial acts, and administered the sacraments without first obtaining church authority. In 1811 he finally applied to the synod to license and ordain him. Though his irregular action during the previous five years was indeed against him, his consecration and devotion were so manifest, that the committee to whom the request was referred reported that "This young man expressed regret for his error, and stated that he did it through ignorance. In other respects he

is worthy to be received." At the next meeting of the synod he was therefore licensed and given authority to serve congregations in the capacity of minister, though he was not ordained until 1817. That the synod made no mistake in taking this action was later attested by forty-two years of a singularly devoted ministry.

The same year in which Rev. Mahnenschmidt was licensed, he came to Ohio, and became pastor of about a dozen congregations in Columbiana and adjoining counties, his ministry reaching from 1812-1857. He died in Canfield, Ohio, on July 11, 1857.

After coming to Ohio he visited Stark County at stated intervals, preaching in Canton, and several neighboring congregations, such as the Warstler, the Sherman's and the Paris Church. These were all at that time union Reformed and Lutheran Churches. Rev. Mahnenschmidt's connection with the First Reformed Church of Canton dates from 1806 or 1807 and lasted until 1818 when Rev. Benjamin Faust became the resident pastor of the Canton Charge.

Before Rev. Mahnenschmidt was finally ordained to the ministry, the Synod required (as it did of all young ministers) that he submit annually an outline of the sermons preached, so that the older ministers might judge of his progress in sermonizing and caution him against any error in doctrine. One of these pamphlets of sermon-heads has been preserved in the archives of the First Reformed Church of Lancaster, Pa. Through the courtesy of the present pastor of the Church, the Rev'd W. Stuart Cramer, it is possible to present a *fac simile* of a page of this pamphlet at the beginning of the chapter, and add the translation here. These outlines are of special interest to the Canton church because without a doubt some of them were used in the regular preaching trips which Rev. Mahnenschmidt made to Canton during the period in question.



Springfield	On Luke 5 : 32. "I am not come to call the righteous but sinners." 1. The sinners who are called to repentance. 2. The righteous.
Good Hope Church	On Rev. 22 : 14. "Blessed are they that do his commandments." 1. The commandments. 2. The keeping of the same.
Salem's Church	On Gal. 6 : 15. "For in Christ Jesus neither—" 1. That which does not avail. 2. That which does avail.
Columbiana	On the same notes.
Bordman	On Acts 3 : 19. "Repent ye therefore—" 1. True repentance. 2. The fruits thereof. 3. The infinite advantage.
In Liberty	On the same notes.

## CHAPTER II

### CANTON'S FIRST CHURCH EDIFICE

**I**N this chapter the development of Canton and the Reformed congregation will be traced from 1810 to the coming in 1818 of Rev. Benjamin Faust, the first resident pastor of the Reformed congregation.

When Canton was laid out in 1806 by Bezaleel Wells, three parcels of ground were dedicated for public purposes. The plats where McKinley Park, the Central High School, and the First Presbyterian Church are now located were marked respectively as being intended "For a cemetery", "For a School," and, "For a House of Worship."

The plot dedicated to church purposes was 200 by 200 feet in size and was located between Tuskarawas and Seventh Streets, and Wells and Plum Streets. Plum Street was later renamed in honor of the most eminent citizen whom Canton has had, William McKinley; Tuskarawas Street gradually became more dignified and so the "k" was changed to a "c." Seventh Street is now called Second Street S.W.

Canton in 1810 had about two score inhabitants, and could boast of two stores, two mills, a grist-mill and a saw-mill, four taverns, and a number of shops conducted respectively by a butcher, a tailor, a shoemaker, a carpenter and a wheelwright. A tanyard was also in operation. A school-teacher, a doctor and a lawyer had already settled in Canton, but as yet no preacher of the Gospel was on hand to minister regularly to the spiritual needs of the people.

The occasional visits of Rev.'s Staugh and Mahnenschmidt had, however, already inspired the people with the thought of building a modest, little church which would serve as the home for the Reformed and the Lutheran congregations which were in the process of formation. The people of each denomination were too few in number, and too poor in purse, to attempt the erection of separate church buildings. Furthermore, their res-



REV. JOHN PETER MAHNENSCHMIDT  
*Taken after death. Only picture known to be in existence*





idence in eastern Pennsylvania and Maryland had made them familiar with the idea of union churches, owned by the two denominations, and used alternatively by the Reformed and Lutherans. The denominational barriers between the Reformed and Lutheran churches during that period were almost obliterated both in this county as well as in the fatherland. The beloved German tongue made a bond of union more strong than denominational watchwords, and hence the pioneer Reformed and Lutherans quickly came to a satisfactory understanding, effected a suitable form of organization, took possession about 1810 of the lots which had been dedicated for church purposes, and at once began preparations to erect a little church. The people were all poor and could give but little money; but timber was plentiful and their arms were strong, and the folks donated their labor, so that after some months a small frame church was under roof. Even before the building was plastered and the interior had been finished the first services were held. This modest house of worship served the two congregations as a church-home for about thirteen years.

Unfortunately all the church records of this period have been lost, and it is no longer possible from contemporary documents to give the exact dates when each congregation was organized, or the union of the two took place. Neither has the date when the first church-building was begun or finished come down to us, nor the time and the details of the dedication. Since the date 1810 for the beginning of the church enterprise is well authenticated in the history of Canton, and since necessarily the two congregations must have had some form of organization before the union building project could have begun; it appears certain that the date 1810 cannot be too early for the organization of the First Reformed Church.

The author of this history has gone carefully through thousands of pages of the first English and German newspapers published in Canton with the hope of finding definite dates for the organization of the congregation and the building of the first church. The search, however, was in vain.

In the minutes of the "Synod of the German Reformed

Church in the United States of America," the congregations of Columbiana and Stark County are mentioned early. In 1809 three congregations sent a request to the Synod to be supplied with a regular minister. As there was no minister available, the synod could only resolve, "That these congregations be replied to by letter and have encouragement extended to them." Three years passed by and still no minister could be sent. Then in 1812, the Synod resolved to send certain ministers into that western country in order to visit the members of our church residing there, and offered to pay their expenses. Once more nothing came of it. Again the following year there came to the Synod from Ohio, "Several requests and calls from destitute congregations and neighborhoods in which their sad condition on account of the want of the ordinary means of grace was very feelingly portrayed." One of these urgent petitions came from congregations in Stark County. The congregations referred to were Canton and Warstler's for certain and probably also Sherman's. Again the Synod had to answer that nothing could be done and the congregations were informed that they should continue, "To hope that in the future the Synod would be able to send them missionaries." The Synod also appointed a special day of humiliation and prayer for the sad religious condition of the country.

No further petitions were sent to the Synod from Stark County. The members of the Canton and the surrounding congregations were now being visited, at long intervals, indeed, but yet regularly, by Rev. John Peter Mahnenschmidt, who had removed to Ohio in 1812.

Rev. Mahnenschmidt in a brief auto-biographical sketch which he prepared, has left a number of interesting glimpses of religious and moral conditions as he found them in the various communities which he served. The people had been so long destitute of regular religious instruction, and the youth especially had grown up with so very few opportunities for hearing the Gospel that, "Wild and uncultivated as was the country itself, so were also the inhabitants, especially the youth. During the week the people labored on their farms, and the

Sabbath was devoted to hunting. I often heard the report of guns on the Sabbath, to the great grief of my heart, while riding from one of my preaching points to another. These things often caused the silent tear to start as I rode along in meditation. I contended against this evil with all my might and held before them the sinfulness of their conduct. There were also many sinful customs prevalent at that time. Many were in the habit of collecting together to hold shooting-matches on which occasion there was often much drunkenness, causing shameful profanity of God's name, and the whole seldom ended without a fight. Many too were in the habit of frequenting the dance. Against all these things I took a decided stand; and often in no smooth or measured style did I warn them against these and such like services of the devil."

Of his work in Canton, Rev. Mahnenschmidt has one interesting paragraph which must also be quoted. "I preached to a very large number of persons in the town-hall. They pressed me very earnestly to preach for them regularly, urging that there were many young persons who ought to be instructed and confirmed." It would appear from this that the little union-church was too small to hold the people who desired to hear Rev. Mahnenschmidt at that time, and also that the Reformed congregations of Canton and vicinity felt able to support their own minister. Of his subsequent work in Canton, Rev. Mahnenschmidt writes further, "At this place there was a Lutheran minister with whom I had before been acquainted who offered to instruct these young people in the Heidelberg Catechism, and prepare them for confirmation. At length I received a letter requesting me to come and complete their course of instruction and confirm them. When I arrived I found about fifty catechumens. These, however, were not all young persons; there were among them fathers and mothers who were old enough to be my parents. I held catechetical instructions with them for one week, and then confirmed them, and administered to them the Holy Communion, while many tears of joy and of sorrow were shed. I also afterwards confirmed thirty-odd more in the same place."

Rev. Mahnenschmidt could give Canton only infrequent services. His field was very large. For many years he served ten regular congregations besides preaching occasionally at a number of additional points. It is almost inconceivable how he could carry the burden of his labors for so long. Of the time of his most strenuous activity he writes feelingly, "I was at this time a young man (he was about thirty years old) ; yet I often felt exhausted, having no rest day or night."

As the years went by more ministers were available and Rev. Mahnenschmidt was able to give over some portions of his vast field to younger hands. Rev. Benjamin Faust took charge of the congregations in Canton and vicinity in 1818; and Rev. Henry Sonnendecker served another large portion of the field lying partly in Stark and in Columbiana County from 1820 on. Rev. Mahnenschmidt himself retained the congregations lying in the vicinity of North Jackson in Mahoning County.

The additional leisure which the smaller field made possible was used partly in literary work. Rev. Mahnenschmidt was a writer of more than ordinary ability. Sermons and poems came readily from his pen. His chief literary production, however, which has come down to us was an edition and arrangement of the Heidelberg Catechism in German. This book was published in 1834, in Canton by Peter Kaufmann. It was extensively used by the Reformed congregations in this section of Ohio. Occasional copies may still be found in some of the old German families. In the course of time this modest catechism was entirely forgotten. In the year 1913, Mrs. M. M. Herbst of Canton, a daughter of Peter Kaufmann, sent a copy to the author of this history ; and later also presented him with a number of additional copies, so that now Mahnenschmidt's Catechism will be preserved in the libraries of two of our Educational Institutions. Mrs. Herbst still lives in the old Kaufmann home which is now the oldest building erected in Canton. In the attic of the old home the Catechisms had peacefully reposed for seventy-five years.

In this edition of the Catechism, Rev. Mahnenschmidt

divided all the longer questions into several parts, and inserted numerous additional questions of an explanatory nature. The determination to publish it sprang from the observation, as is stated in the preface, that "It appeared to be too difficult for many children and especially the young folks to memorize the entire Catechism." Therefore, the original questions, "Are simplified so that thereby they may become more intelligible and retainable for the understanding and memory of the youth."

The book also contains much additional matter of value, such as a brief summary of the three parts of the Catechism; seventeen pages of questions and answers entitled, "First Milk of Truth for Sucklings in Age and Understanding"; twenty pages of hymns in part original; prayers and scripture selections for various occasions; and excerpts from Dr. F. A. Lampe's book "Heiliger Brautschmuck."

The work is excellently done, and must have been well adapted to the needs of the age for which it was written. As an example of his method the treatment of question 60 may be taken, which in the original is long and difficult. It appears as follows:

How do we become righteous before God?

Only by true faith.—Rom. 5: 1.

What is true faith?

A hearty trust that God is gracious to me for the sake of Christ.

For whose sake is the sinner justified?

For the sake of the satisfaction and righteousness of Christ.

How is the sinner justified through the righteousness of Christ?

The righteousness of Christ is granted the sinner by God, and reckoned to him as though it were his own.

From what is the sinner declared free by virtue of this justification?

From the guilt and punishment of sin.

Of what is he assured?

Of the right to everlasting life.

Rev. Mahnenschmidt thus appears to us as an able writer, a zealous pastor, an effective preacher, and withal a man of unspotted character and reputation. He was able to stay in



the harness almost to the end of his life. In the notice of his departure the papers said of him, "The Rev. John Peter Mahnenschmidt has gone to his blessed reward. . . . He was very successful in winning souls to Christ. He died as he lived, firm in the faith, and with an assurance of a glorious immortality."

During the period that Rev. Mahnenschmidt was serving the Canton Church the little village increased in population until in 1817 there were more than 500 inhabitants. In the Canton Repository of December 12, 1816 there is an excellent description of the village, its business places, and its future expectations. This description bears the title, "Topographical View of Canton, Ohio." Since it throws so much light upon the conditions amid which the Reformed people were trying to establish a congregation, and also because it is worth preserving for its historical interest, it may fittingly be placed at the close of this chapter.

"Canton is situated on a beautiful eminence which rises in the midst of an extensive plain. Excellent well water may easily be obtained on the highest ground; and the town, though formerly somewhat subject to fever and ague, is now by the draining off of stagnant water, rendered wholly free from that disorder.

"On the east and west side of the town flow the two branches of the Nimishillon, which form a junction about one and one-fourth mile south of the town; to which point it is believed the Nimishillon will be declared navigable. These branches are crossed by four bridges, two of which are 200 feet in length and of a good construction. A small stream of water (Shriver's Run) runs directly through the town which drives a fulling mill, waters three tan yards and then passes off to the Nimishillon. The shortest distance to the Tuscarawas River is eight miles, and to the Cuyahoga twenty-five. The distance between the heads of navigation on these rivers is about eight miles, and there is a considerable pond about midway of these points which sends out a stream to each river.

"The first house in Canton was erected in the summer of

1806. The population at this time is about 500. There is at present a temporary courthouse and jail, but the foundation is laid for a new and elegant Court-House, 44 by 44 feet. Canton contains a printing office and news-paper establishment, two houses for religious worship, one for the German Lutherans and one for the Presbyterians;\* a bank with a capital of \$100,000.00; nine stores which employ a capital stock of fifty-five or sixty thousand dollars; four taverns; four tan-yards. three of which are in operation and possess the advantage of large capitals; one nail manufactory; one of tin and copper; two of hats; one blacksmith shop on a large scale; one clock and watch-maker; one gun-smith; three saddlers; three cabinet makers; two wheelwrights and chairmakers; one chair-maker and painter; five shoe-makers; three tailors; a pottery and a number of house-carpenters and joiners. Within four miles of the town are seven grist-mills, three saw-mills, one oil-well, one fulling mill, and two carding machines for wool and cotton.

"It is believed that a mason, a cooper, a brewer, one or two more black-smiths and shoemakers would find a sufficiency of business here. Some lots in the town-plot remain unsold which can now be purchased to advantage. The population of the county is between seven and eight thousand and constantly increasing. Many judicious persons believe that Canton holds out a flattering prospect to men of enterprise."

If the "judicious persons" referred to could come back and see the Canton of today with its amazing diversity of industries and business enterprises; and its large and splendid church edifices and congregations, they would certainly feel proud of their prophetic judgment, and could boastfully declare: We told you so.

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\* The writer of this description is evidently confused here. He calls the German Reformed congregation, Presbyterian. This was a common error among the English at that time. We also know that the two congregations occupied the same house of worship, not two separate buildings as stated. There was no other church-building in Canton at that time.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE FIRST RESIDENT MINISTER

**I**T was a day of rejoicing in the history of the struggling Reformed congregations in Canton and vicinity when the message was received that Rev. Benjamin Faust would accept their call and become the first resident pastor.

Benjamin Faust was born in Berks County, Pennsylvania, (In the baptism certificate still in possession of the Faust family, the name of the state is spelled Pinselfane) on November 19, 1797. When the lad was only nine years old, the family moved to Ohio and settled in Canfield, Trumbull County. Educational facilities were very few in those days, and the farm and the forest were insistent in their demands for work, still young Benjamin managed to secure the first elements of an English education. A story from his youth has been preserved which is worth recording. One day while working in the forest with a companion (John Geisweid) Benjamin broke the middle finger of his left hand. The injury seemed very dangerous to the two lads and help was far off. Hence, after a few moments of earnest consultation the decision was reached that heroic methods must be applied, and an immediate amputation was imperative. So Benjamin laid his finger on a stump and Geisweid with one neat stroke severed the finger from the hand.

Previous to this already, young Faust had expressed a desire to give himself to the work of the ministry. The physical handicap which the loss of the finger laid upon him probably also had its influence; for the following year (1814) he began the study of theology in earnest under the direction of Rev. J. P. Mahnenschmidt. The next four years were spent in teaching district school in Springfield Twp., Columbiana County, conducting singing schools and continuing his preparation for the ministry. His theological studies were directed

67- Magennis Smith

Lewis Smith

Robert Smith

John Smith

W. C. Smith

F. C. Nave

Theodore P. Bolliger

SIGNATURES OF ALL THE PASTORS OF THE FIRST  
REFORMED CHURCH



by Rev. Mahnenschmidt and Rev. John Staugh, the Lutheran minister who had conducted the first religious services in Canton. Young Faust also made occasional addresses and Gospel talks as the opportunity offered. In 1818 he was licensed to preach by the Synod of the Reformed Church, and the following year was ordained to the work of the holy ministry. Rev. Mahnenschmidt had been anxiously awaiting the time when he could turn over a part of his vast field to another man, and hence Rev. Faust took charge of the Stark County congregations, serving Canton, Osnaburg, Paris, Martin's, Sherman's, Zion's, Bethlehem, and Heinrich's. The location of the first three congregations is familiar to all. Martin's congregation was near Mapleton. Sherman's is in Bethlehem Twp., ten miles southwest of Canton. Zion's was near New Berlin. Bethlehem was in Navarre. Heinrich's is now known as the Warstler Church, north of Canton. Rev. Faust also organized and served several other congregations.

The pastorate began in 1818, probably immediately after he had been licensed. Two important events occurred in 1819, for Rev. Faust was both ordained and married during the year. The Canton Repository of April 30, 1819 has the following brief notice: "Married—On the 15th inst., by the Rev. Anthony Weyer, the Rev. Benjamin Faust to Miss Nancy Rank, both of the vicinity of this place." Benjamin was a few months past twenty-one, while Nancy was not yet seventeen. They made their home on the Georgetown Road, on the site where their grand children for years conducted the well-known Faust greenhouses and nursery.

The condition of the congregations served by Rev. Faust and the circumstances of the people have been indicated in the previous chapter. A few quotations from the reminiscences of Rev. Henry Sonnendecker will throw additional light upon the difficulties that had to be faced.\*

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\* Rev. Henry Sonnendecker was born in Washington County, Pennsylvania in 1792. He was licensed and ordained by the Synod of the Reformed Church at the same time that Rev. Benjamin Faust was. Was



"The members of our church which were scattered here and there, in the mostly uncultivated wilds, living in small huts, were like sheep without a shepherd, and without meadows and flowing waters. Who would not have taken pity upon these lambs of Jesus?" Where no church buildings had yet been erected, he says, "We contented ourselves with worshipping in private houses, school-houses, and barns. Nay, sometimes even the sacrament was administered in barns; but even here the Lord blessed his people, and permitted them to feel that he is bound to no locality but is everywhere present, wherever men will call upon him." In the northwest corner of Wayne County was a small union-church served by Rev. Faust, and Rev. Anthony Weyer.\* Of this he says, "The members of the two congregations had built themselves a small, log-church, which as yet, however, contained neither pulpit, altar, nor proper seats. It was, indeed, no very large, splendid or costly building, still the young congregation was well satisfied with it, and the Lord was pleased also to look graciously down upon us and bless his precious word to the upbuilding of his congregation."

The territory covered by the one synod that the Reformed Church had at this time was so large that in 1819 it was divided

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pastor in Wayne County (Wooster, etc.,) and Stark County, from 1820-1831, and in Columbiana County 1831-1851, and died at North Lima, Ohio, October 16, 1851. Mr. Sonnendecker received his first religious impressions from Rev. John Peter Mahnenschmidt and in early life was greatly influenced by the missionary and evangelistic zeal of Mahnenschmidt, and prepared himself for the holy ministry under his direction. In 1818-1819 Rev. Sonnendecker made a number of trips through Stark County and four neighboring counties. Scattered congregations and groups of Reformed believers were hunted up and the sacraments were administered. These reminiscences were published in the "Western Missionary" in 1849. The quotations given refer especially to experiences made upon his missionary trips in 1818-1819.

\* Rev. Anthony Weyer was the first resident minister in Canton. He took charge of the Lutheran congregations in Canton and vicinity in 1812, and served the union Reformed and Lutheran congregations until his death in 1829. He was thus closely associated with both Rev.'s Mahnenschmidt and Faust.

into districts, and in 1820 an Ohio Classis was formed. Of the five ministers present at the organization two, that is, Rev. J. P. Mahnenschmidt, and Rev. B. Faust had been associated with the Canton congregation. The others were Revs. H. Sonnendecker, Geo. Weiss and Thomas Winters. The elder from the Canton Church was George Wirtz. The new classis included five ministers, fifty congregations, and about 1800 members. The Canton charge alone had ten congregations and about 300 who had communed during the year. The actual number of members enrolled must therefore have been at least four or five hundred. The Canton charge thus constituted about one-fourth of the new classis.

Rev. Faust reported that he had baptized 191 children, confirmed 100 young people and buried 24 persons during the preceding year. There were also eight Sunday Schools in the charge. As it was impossible for the pastor to visit the congregations oftener than once in several weeks, the Sunday School meeting with a sermon read occasionally by some suitable person served to hold the people together.

The Ohio Classis met in Canton in 1821. The church proved too small to hold the people, and therefore the religious services and business meetings had to be held in the courthouse. The Canton charge reported an increase of communicants to 540.

The statistical reports of the charge are very incomplete during the first quarter century and frequently are altogether missing. Enough are still on record, however, to show a steady and gratifying increase from year to year. In the summing up of the reports of the pastors to the classis, there appears an almost unanimous tone of joy and gratitude. Such expressions as, "Peace and unity prevailed in the congregations," "The preaching of the Gospel was attended with the divine blessing," "New congregations were gathered," and others of the same tenor occur each year.

Among the Church customs that prevailed in the Canton charge at that time and for a long period thereafter, mention

should be made of several now entirely forgotten. First, the sexes were carefully separated, the men sitting on one side of the aisle and the women on the other; and, woe, unto the luckless individual that did not heed the unwritten law. His strange conduct furnished fruitful material for discussion for many weeks—especially for the women. Second, the singing would strike us as most peculiar now. There was no organ, and hymnbooks were very scarce. Hence the minister was obliged to read the hymn line by line, pausing between lines while the congregation sang the line read. Third, the deacons and elders invariably sat in the pews placed besides the pulpit. These were considered as seats of peculiar honor. From there the entire audience was in plain view, and any disturbance or inattention was sternly suppressed. Fourth, the funerals were very simple occasions. An undertaker and a hearse were unheard of luxuries. Kindhearted friends and willing neighbors gladly volunteered their services. They washed and dressed the body and laid it into the coffin, rudely made by the village carpenter. The coffin was carried to the grave by four men, often on their shoulders. If the distance was too far, a second relay of four would take turns at carrying.

Canton at this time was still a straggly village in the back woods. There were but few roads and these were generally in a miserable condition. Walking and horseback riding were the general mode of locomotion. Under these circumstances there was no market for the produce which was raised in the community. Everything was sold at ridiculously low prices. Eggs were four cents a dozen, butter six cents a pound, oats sold at twelve cents, corn at fifteen, and wheat at twenty-five cents a bushel. Very little money circulated. Exchange was mostly by barter. The people generally were very poor.

The village of Canton itself presented an ill-kept appearance, as is clear from the following notice which appeared in the Canton Repository in the spring of 1821, by order of the constable:

## CLEAR THE STREETS!

"The subscriber once more requests that the citizens of Canton would remove their woodpiles from off the streets. Those who do not comply with this request in a short time will be dealt with as the law directs, without respect of persons."

An incident from the life of Rev. Faust further illustrates the general poverty of the times. In 1822, he was sent as delegate to the Synod which was to meet in Harrisburg, Pa. The journey of 350 miles had to be made on horseback and by stage coach. This mode of traveling was too strenuous and somewhere in Pennsylvania Mr. Faust fell seriously ill. For several weeks he was under the care of a physician. When his money was all gone he had to borrow to get back home and arrived there thirty dollars in debt. The following year the Synod being notified of his sad circumstances (*traurigen Umstaenden*) took up an offering of \$19.15 for his benefit. Three years later by a special resolution, the new Synod of Ohio also gave him permission to retain the offerings which the congregations were required to take up each year for the expenses of the Synod, and apply them to the discharging of his indebtedness. It took four years until these synodical offerings amounted to the \$30.00. It will be interesting to note from what small beginnings our congregational offerings have grown, and therefore the figures are here appended: 1824, \$7.00; 1825, \$10.75; 1826, \$6.37½; 1827, \$5.87.

The reader must keep in mind that during these years, the Canton congregation was exerting every energy to complete the new church and pay off their indebtedness. Hence, the very small offerings for other purposes.

## CHAPTER IV

### RELOCATING AND BUILDING

THE first church building was occupied by the Reformed and Lutherans for about twelve years. Towards the end of this period a sentiment for relocating gradually developed. Several reasons had arisen to make a relocation desirable. It seems that the majority of the members lived east of town and therefore the location of a new church more than half a mile farther east would be more convenient. Furthermore, the old building was entirely too small to accommodate the growing congregations; and it was necessary for all special services to forsake the church and go to the large hall in the courthouse. The chief reason, however, lay in the fact that other denominations were preparing to organize congregations in Canton, and the Reformed and Lutheran people feared that another church might be erected on the plot of ground which Bezaleel Wells had dedicated, "For a House of Worship." In fact, it was believed that any other congregation might claim the right to make use of the old church and even of the new, if it were erected on the old site.

These considerations were sufficient to cause the two congregations to appoint a committee to draw up "Articles of Union and Association." These were approved by each congregation and signed by the joint committee on June 5, 1822. This committee consisted of Rev. Benjamin Faust, Rev. Anthony Weyer, Fred Albright, George Wirt and Jacob Rupp.

A satisfactory location was soon selected about a quarter of a mile outside of the limits of the village to the east, on the site where the First Reformed Church and the First Lutheran Church and the two parsonages are now located. The land was bought from Bezaleel Wells for \$80 and was 198 by 396 feet in size. The deed is dated May 16, 1823 (but it was not recorded until October 6, 1825) and contains the following provisions, "For the sole use and benefit and behoof of the





FIRST REFORMED CHURCH ERECTED IN 1824

*This was the second building which the Reformed and the Lutherans occupied*

Drawn by W. C. Faust, supervisor of drawing in the Canton public schools. Copied from an old print with details added from the recollections of the oldest members.





said United Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran and Evangelical Reformed Churches, to be by them occupied and enjoyed in common for the purposes of erecting and preparing thereon a house of public worship, a schoolhouse, and a cemetery or burying ground in conformity to the articles of union and association between the said Evangelical Lutheran and Evangelical Reformed Churches." George Wirt and George Snider were the trustees of the United Congregations.

Material and money for the new church were rapidly subscribed, the labor also was largely donated, and in about a year's time the building was ready for use. The members in their poverty could give only small sums, the funds collected were not sufficient to completely finish and furnish the new church, hence it was used more than five years before it was finally finished. No details of the service of dedication have come down to us. Even the date of dedication is doubtful.

The new church was erected at the east end of the tract purchased, on the site where the Lutheran Church now stands. It was a brick building, almost square, and very high. The interior would doubtlessly strike present day church goers as rather odd. A gallery ten or twelve feet from the floor ran around the east, south, and west sides. The pulpit was on the north side and was raised to the level of the gallery. A steep, narrow stairway with a railing led up to the pulpit on one side. The pulpit itself was so small that only two persons could occupy it at the same time. Over the pulpit a canopy of wood was fastened. This canopy was painted blue on the lower side to represent the sky. Above the canopy was a huge yellow star. The pews were most primitive in style. The end piece was square at the top, and the backs were nailed on straight up and down. The seat also was straight and level. The designers of the pews evidently planned to make the seats so uncomfortable that the brethren would have to stay awake from sheer physical discomfort. After the church was finally completed the demand arose for a better seat, and more comfortable pews were installed.

The church was warmed by two great stoves heated with

wood. Large logs reposed beside the stove, and were fed to the flames as necessary. Originally home-made candles furnished the light for such evening services as were held. The earlier reports of evening services frequently speak of meetings by candle-light. Later oil-lamps were introduced. Three entrances led into the church, a door being located in the exact middle of the east, the west, and the south sides. One path led straight east to Herbruck Court; another ran in a slanting direction until it emerged on Tuscarawas Street at the point where the dividing line between the Reformed and the Lutheran Church property is now located.

The remainder of the lot not occupied by the church building served as a cemetery for over forty years. The dead of both congregations were buried there and also occasionally non-church members. It would seem that at a later period the Reformed Consistory was especially lenient in granting permission to bury those who were not members of the congregation. This led to a vigorous protest in 1854 from the Lutheran congregation, which resolved to notify the Reformed that "As the deed for the church ground gives the right to a burial-place only to the Lutheran and Reformed congregations, we are of the opinion that the burial ground, in harmony with the provisions of the deed, shall be only for the use of the congregations, and the Secretary is to notify the Reformed Consistory to this effect, so that they may also act according to the provisions of the deed."

Two movements were developing in the Reformed congregations during this period. The one aimed to foster the Reformed interests with greater zeal; the other strove to effect a complete union with the Lutheran church. The first movement, in 1824, led to the formation of an independent Ohio Synod. The Ohio Classis met that year in New Philadelphia in the courthouse of Tuscarawas County. After a long discussion it was unanimously decided to declare the Ohio Classis an independent Synod with the name "The High German, Evangelical-Reformed Synod of Ohio." Several reasons were stated for taking this vital step, such as: the refusal of the

Synod to permit the Ohio Classis to ordain its own candidates for the ministry, and demanding the long journey to the east to be examined and ordained; the demands of the religious conditions in Ohio which made immediate help imperative; the long and expensive journeys over the mountains; the feeling that the money which their long journey required had better be spent in Ohio for the good of the Church.

Rev. Faust, who was still saving to pay off the debt incurred on his disastrous journey to the Synod in 1822, was enthusiastically in favor of the organization of the new "Synod of Ohio." The Ohio Synod at its organization had only eight ministers present, among them were J. P. Mahnenschmidt, B. Faust, Henry Sonnendecker and William Reiter, a young clergyman whom Rev. Faust had aided in preparing for the ministry. Eleven ministers representing about sixty congregations, and 2500 members entered the new organization. Of this number the Canton charge alone furnished ten congregations, ten Sunday Schools, and about 600 members; that is, one-sixth of the congregations, and about one-fourth of the members. Race suicide was not yet a problem in those days as is evident from the fact that there were 286 baptisms in the Canton charge during the preceding three years.

The second movement aimed to effect an organic union with the Lutheran Church. Some of the pastors had followed their theological studies partly under the direction of Lutheran ministers, and felt very fraternal towards the Lutheran ministry as a consequence. Others were serving union-congregations and the relation was proving pleasant and profitable; hence arose the desire for a permanent, organic union of the two denominations. The Ohio Synod sent two delegates regularly to the Lutheran Synod of Ohio and received their delegates. The same number of copies of the minutes of the Ohio Synod was sent to the Lutheran Synod, as was sent to the Eastern Synod of the Reformed Church, and the minutes of the Lutheran Synod as well as of the Eastern Synod were examined regularly by a committee whose duty it was to report on items which might interest the Ohio Synod. These efforts

were kept up for a decade and more; but gradually as the Reformed consciousness became clearer, the movement waned and then died. In the Canton charge the feeling of close relationship to the Lutherans survived long after it had died in the denomination at large.

During the first years of the Canton charge all the services were conducted in the German language. As soon as the minutes of the Ohio Synod were also printed in English (this occurred for the first time in 1826), Rev. Faust also asked for a certain number of English copies. This number was increased from year to year, indicating a gradual coming in of the English in some of the congregations.

During this period Rev. Faust displayed a remarkable missionary zeal. The names of several new congregations are recorded, such as, Schaber's, Paulus, Peter's, Israel's and Union. Additional Sunday Schools were also organized, bringing the number up to fifteen. For several years more Sunday Schools were conducted in the charge than there were congregations. It is evident that Rev. Faust started Sunday Schools in every locality where he preached occasionally, even before conditions were ripe for organizing a congregation.

On the front page of the oldest church-record that is still in the possession of our congregation two interesting notes are written. The first refers to the purchase of the book as follows, "This book belongs to the Reformed congregation of Canton, Stark County, Ohio. It was bought January 1, 1829. Until then the Reformed and Lutherans ("Luderaner," as it is spelled) had a common church-book. This book was paid for from offerings of the Reformed Church. Into this book will be entered the baptized, confirmed, communed, etc." The price of the book is given as \$2.12½. It is most unfortunate that the first church-record, which the two congregations kept in common, has been lost. Neither the Reformed nor the Lutheran people have any record as to the disposition which was made of it. The historical data which it must have contained would be simply invaluable at the present time for establishing the precise facts concerning the organization of the congrega-

tions, the building and cost of the churches, and other items which with our present meager knowledge can only be guessed at.

The second note refers to a disastrous storm which swept over Canton in 1829, during which lightning struck the church and created a great deal of damage. This was especially hard for the congregation as the building was still but incompletely furnished, and a debt yet rested upon it. This experience made such an impression upon people and pastor that the fact and the date were put on record. It happened July 18, 1829.



## CHAPTER V

### FAUST AS PASTOR, PREACHER, AND MAN

IN the last chapter the remarkable activity of Rev. Faust as a pastor has been indicated. Not content with serving the seven or eight congregations of which he took charge when he entered upon his pastorate, his apostolic spirit was manifested in the eagerness with which he sought out other opportunities of service. At least five other congregations were gathered through his efforts, and the number of Sunday Schools connected with the parish was increased to fifteen. The "Beobachter," a German weekly newspaper published in Canton, in December of 1827 had a notice of a special Sunday School parade to be held on New Year's Day. After the parade a speech was to be given at the courthouse. The item further stated that, "The friends and enemies of the movement are courteously invited to be present." Though no names are given it appears certain that Rev. Faust and the First Reformed Sunday School were included.

In the same newspaper about a month later mention is made of the organization of a Stark County Bible Society with branch societies in Canton, Paris, Waynesburg, etc. The purpose of the society is stated thus, "This society relying upon divine assistance will put forth every effort to supply every family in Stark County, that does not now possess a copy of the Holy Scriptures, with a copy during the next three years." Rev. Benjamin Faust was vice-president of the county organization. The society succeeded in its efforts and a large number of Bibles was put into the homes of Stark County. Throughout his life Rev. Faust never shielded himself but expended time and energy freely even beyond the limits of his own congregation.

As a preacher he was accounted a speaker of eloquence and power. Intense earnestness and vehement action characterized his delivery. This prodigal expenditure of physical





and nervous energy and the hardships incident to serving so large a field literally wore him out, and his health was broken down at an age when he should have been in his prime. Judging by several sermon outlines which have been preserved, Rev. Faust was a clear, forcible, logical thinker. Though his educational advantages had been rather meager, he made the most of the talent entrusted to him. It would seem, however, that opportunity had been denied him to master the intricacies of German orthography. In the formation of his letters he displays a real genius in the originality of his designs; in capitalization and spelling an amazing independence of recognized standards is in evidence. But in his sermons there was substance and heart, as the two outlines which are given will demonstrate.

John 3: 16-21. Gospel Lesson for Monday after Pentecost.

*Text.* Verse 16. "God so loved the world ——"

*Theme.* The Foundation of our Saving Faith.

- I. It is laid in the love of God.
- II. It demands faith, not personal merits.
- III. It gives a great promise.

The above outline in the handwriting of Rev. Faust is preserved as a precious relic by his descendants. The second outline given below was written upon a loose sheet of paper and was found lying between the pages of the church record purchased in 1829 by the Reformed congregation.

*Text.* Thess. 5: 6. "So then let us not sleep, as do the rest, but let us watch and be sober."

- I. The sleep of sin into which all have fallen.
- II. The awakening which is necessary.
- III. The watchfulness which is imperative.

As a man Benjamin Faust stood high in his congregations, in the community, and in the Synod. His early death at the age of only thirty-five was felt as a great loss to the church in Ohio. Only once, so far as the writer has been able to find, did the Ohio Synod pass a special resolution commemorating the death of one of its members or put into its minutes a beau-

tiful eulogy in referring to that member. That one exception occurred at the death of Rev. Faust. The Synod thus bore witness to the great respect and love in which he was universally held. The resolution of the Synod was as follows:

"Synod also called to mind the blessed death of the Rev. Benjamin Faust, of Canton, Ohio, a warm friend and worthy member of our Synod, who now no more needs our praise for his faithfulness and toils, having been translated beyond the scenes of earth, to receive, in a better life, the reward of his labors. He left behind him a wife beloved, children not yet grown up, relatives, a number of esteemed and beloved congregations, and us his sincere and faithful brethren in the faith to mourn his early death. He has shown us an example of piety which is worthy of our imitation, and which leaves us the sweet assurance that we shall only for a brief period be separated from him."

Rev. John W. Hamm, a neighboring pastor during the last six years of Rev. Faust's life, wrote of the deceased as follows: "Over his vast field, he travelled and labored in his Master's cause with marked fidelity, zeal, and perseverance, during the whole period of his public life. His efforts were not in vain. In these flourishing churches, which he aided in founding and building up, are still seen, and will continue to be seen, the fruits of his earnest ministry, his labors and his cares. He now rests in peace. His reward is in heaven."

Before closing this chapter an attempt must be made to estimate the size of the Canton congregation at the time when Rev. Faust laid down his work. The problem is beset with difficulties owing to the incomplete statistics that are still on record, and the fact that generally the statistics which are available, refer to the entire charge, not to an individual congregation. However, a careful comparison of all the figures involved will yield a result which will be sufficiently accurate. In 1829 the names of 99 members are recorded as having communed on May 24. Probably the percentage of those who communed in comparison with the total membership ran higher in those earlier days in the small congregations than they do in the age in which we are now living; and hence a simple comparison may not be absolutely correct. The experience of many years in the Central Synod and also in the individual congregations has



been that the number of communicants is always from 65 to 75 per cent of the total membership. On this basis, the membership at Canton must have been at least 130 to 140 souls. The record of baptisms performed in Canton during the last eight years of Rev. Faust's pastorate is complete. An average of twenty-three infants each year received baptism. When it is remembered that during the first eight years of Rev. Theodore P. Bolliger's ministry when the reported membership was more than one thousand, the average number of baptisms per year was only twenty-six, it will be seen that the estimate of 130 to 140 members is very conservative. Furthermore, the record of the confirmations in Canton during the last five years of Rev. Faust's pastorate is also almost complete. The names recorded average fourteen for each year. The average annual number confirmed during eight years of Rev. Bolliger's ministry is thirty-six. From this again it must appear that the estimate made above is very conservative; and that, in reality the actual membership must have been considerably higher.

## CHAPTER VI

### REV. FAUST'S LAST SIX MONTHS

THE hardships inevitably connected with his vast parish, had gradually undermined Rev. Faust's health. The intense earnestness with which he preached, and the vigor of his delivery caused him to perspire very freely while conducting a service. Long rides followed nearly every service as he hurried on to the next appointment. By night and by day, in all kinds of weather and every degree of temperature, he pushed zealously on. After about ten years of this strenuous activity tuberculosis developed; but the faithful pastor never shirked his work, nor even hesitated for a moment. The progress of the disease for two years was slow; then a rapid change for the worse set in and during the last months of his life preaching became increasingly difficult. Sometimes his voice was so weak that the congregation found it hard to understand.

During this period when Rev. Faust clearly realized that his days on earth were numbered, and that another must soon be found to take his place, he must often have wondered where a successor could be found. All over the state of Ohio and adjoining states were many German communities calling anxiously for someone to come and preach the Gospel to them; but the laborers were few and the fields lay waste. Even if Canton and its surrounding congregations succeeded in securing a minister it would mean that some other charge would at once become shepherdless.

But though the workman falls by the wayside, the work always goes on; for God has a way of providing for his own. A successor was already found, though as yet unknown to Rev. Faust. One day in the spring of 1832 he stopped at Wirth's hotel about a mile west of Reedurban and met for the first time a young German by the name of Peter Herbruck. In the course of their conversation the minister learned that he had come to America some months before, had been in Canton only

a few weeks, and was nineteen years old. The acquaintance soon ripened into a firm friendship. One day young Herbruck confided to his new friend that it had been his desire even from boyhood to become a minister of the Gospel. Immediately Rev. Faust challenged him to begin his preparation for the sacred calling and promised every assistance.

The subsequent occurrences, we will let the young man tell in his own words:

"After several weeks, I became acquainted with my predecessor Rev. B. Faust, who after he had learned to know me a little better, said to me, 'Young man, do not bury your talent in a napkin. We need ministers. Come to me, I will give you books to read and will assist you in every respect, if it is your desire to prepare yourself for the ministry.' I accepted the kind offer, borrowed books from him, and received instruction as often as I could visit him. About three months later, he gave me a text, Matthew 25: 31-46, saying, 'Now you write all you can on this passage of Scripture.' I did so and brought him what had been written. He read it over, making corrections and additions, here and there. As he was suffering from an affection of the throat and could not speak very loud anymore, he requested me to preach to his congregation at Osna-burg on this passage. I did so, and got a Pennsylvania Dutch compliment. I had a full house, and as I was leaving the church, I heard a young girl say to another: That boy can sure rattle it down. (Der Bub kanns aber h'runner rattlen.)

"The next Sunday I preached in Canton. My teacher was present. After the service he said, 'That wasn't so bad; but you talked too fast. Take a little more time.'

"On the third Sunday I was sent to preach at Uniontown, twelve miles north of Canton. My teacher had sent them word that his student would preach that Sunday. I was a stranger in Uniontown, knowing no one and known to no one. Also, I was young, about eighteen and one-half years old, and very bashful. In Uniontown, I found a full house, but was too bashful to introduce myself, and quietly sat down in the front pew among the old men. No one took me for the man who

was to preach to them for I seemed to be too young and poorly clad for a preacher. I had at that time only one coat to wear and that was pretty thin at the elbows. Pretty soon I heard some one say: That young student is late, he ought to be here now. The Bible and hymnbook were on the communion table. I took the two books and climbed the pulpit steps which were rather high. As I was going up to the pulpit, I heard one of the old men say: Well yes, I guess we will get something fine today. (Nu ja, das wird mer heut e'mal eppis Schoenes gebe.) After the service I hurried away, and went back the same day to Canton twelve miles. After that I preached every Sunday for my teacher.

"I also wrote several funeral sermons, so that I might be partly prepared in case there would be a funeral. I wrote a sermon on Psalm 90: 10, 'The days of our years are three score years and ten, etc.' and another on Matthew 19: 14, 'Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, etc.' Soon thereafter an aged mother died, twelve miles north of Canton, and I was to have the funeral sermon. Now, thought I, my sermon on Psalm 90: 10 will just fit in. Early in the morning I started out. When I had reached the bereaved home and the funeral procession was at the point of starting to the cemetery, the son of the departed mother approached me and said: Here is the text chosen by my mother on which her funeral sermon is to be preached. I read the text and discovered that it was not suitable for a funeral sermon, and furthermore that I was unable to get anything out of it to apply to a funeral occasion. So I begged the young man to excuse me because I was only a beginner, and had no ability to preach without preparation, and informed him that I had prepared myself to preach on another text that was more suitable. But his answer was, The sermon must be preached on the text which mother selected. Here it is written down in her own hand; and here are two dollars which she laid aside to pay the preacher. I saw that it was no use to refuse so I consented to use the text chosen. The cemetery was about a mile from the home, and I walked before the funeral procession, hoping to

gather a few ideas on the way. But, alas, a man walked beside me and gabbled all the way so that my head got dizzy, and I could not find a sensible idea. We reached the church, and also during the singing of the hymn I could not collect my thoughts, for the people had no hymn books and so I had to read the hymn line by line. I was filled with such terror that the sweat poured from me though it was rather cold and I thought surely this time I'll get stuck. When the song was nearly ended suddenly the thought flashed into my mind to read the text selected by the deceased, and then to preach the sermon which I had prepared. I did so. On our return to the house of mourning I was told that many of the people were amazed that I could preach such a sermon on a text that had not been given me until I had reached the home."

A most embarrassing incident occurred when the young student conducted his first service at a place a few miles north of Louisville. The gruff farmers, seeing his youth, said in his hearing: Well, he doesn't know anything. (Ja! der weiss nichts.) When the services began some of them even turned their backs towards him. But after the young preacher got started, he quickly caught their attention. Slowly they turned their faces towards him and listened attentively to the end.

Though the assistance of young Herbruck brought some relief to the afflicted pastor, Rev. Faust, he nevertheless continued conscientiously to perform the greater part of his pastoral duties himself. Early in November of 1832, he rode out several miles to the northwest of Canton to conduct a funeral service. It was noted by the congregation that he was preaching with his old-time vigor. The exertion threw the speaker into a profuse perspiration. It was a raw and cold day. On the way home, he became chilled to the bone. As he reached his own door, a violent fit of coughing seized him and racked his enfeebled frame. Suddenly a stream of blood burst from his mouth. The long-feared hemorrhage had come. In his weakened condition he could not rally. A few days later, on Saturday, the tenth, "he gently closed his earthly career without a groan."



In the next issue of the Canton Repository, the following beautiful obituary notice appeared:

"The Rev. Benjamin Faust, pastor of the Reformed Church, died at his residence in Canton Township, on Saturday the tenth of November, of a pulmonary consumption with which he had been afflicted for several years, in the thirty-fourth year of his age. He has left a disconsolate widow and four small children to lament their irreparable loss. In him shone that excellence of character that demands the esteem of all, even an enemy, if he had one. A sense of conscious rectitude gave him peace of mind while sojourning here below, and enabled him to meet the grim tyrant death as a kind messenger, sent by his Lord and Master to conduct his departing spirit from a temporary and probationary state of existence to the mansions of eternal felicity. He bore his afflictions with a Christian resignation to the will of his Heavenly Father, and gently closed his earthly career without a groan. In his lectures he inculcated pure and unfeigned piety to God; and in his daily avocations, both by example and precept, he enjoined the strictest rules of morality; and of him it may be truly said, "he died the death of the righteous."

The body was laid to rest in the church cemetery. The grave was located a few feet to the north of the rear entrance of the Reformed Church as it is at present. A simple stone marked the site for more than sixty years. Mrs. Faust, though still a young woman of only thirty-two years, did not marry again. For forty-two years, until her death on May 9, 1874, she did not cease to mourn the husband so early torn from her side. At her death she was buried in the Rowland cemetery. Her husband's remains were taken up soon after and buried again beside the faithful wife.

Rev. Faust should be held in grateful remembrance by the present generation of members of the First Church. He performed hard, exacting pioneer work with great zeal, for a period of thirteen years. His friend and neighbor, Rev. J. W. Hamm, sums up his life and activities in the words: "He was a good man, earnest, zealous, and faithful to his trust, and beloved by all who knew him. He stood high both as a Christian and as a minister of the Gospel."



## CHAPTER VII

### PETER HERBRUCK'S YOUTH

FOR more than fifty years, Rev. Peter Herbruck served as pastor of the First Reformed Church of Canton. With the exception of the last thirteen years from one to eight additional congregations also belonged to the charge. He labored not only in Canton but in all of Stark County and even beyond the boundaries of the county. From a youth of nineteen and one-half years when the blunt Pennsylvania Germans addressed him familiarly as "Peter," he guided the destiny of these congregations until by the effectiveness of his ministry, his high standing in the community, and the impress of his striking personality, he was known far and wide as "Father Herbruck."

In this chapter will be given the story of his childhood and youth, with its various ambitions and dreams, as Rev. Herbruck wrote them down himself.

"As I look back upon my past life, I see everywhere the wonderful guidance of God. I see how all the events of my life hang together like the links of a chain. I was born February 8, 1813 in the village of Grossteinhausen, Canton Neuhausen, Landcomisariat Zweibruecken, Rheinkreis Bavaria. During my sixth year I was sent to school, and made good progress in learning, so that by my eleventh year I was known as the best scholar in the school, and according to the custom in vogue was allowed to sit up at the head. Our teacher was still one of the old style who was more apt in wielding hazel switches than in imparting knowledge. But, so far as I can recollect, I experienced the effect of his hazel rod only once.

"When I was fourteen years old, I was confirmed. Already in my eighth year the desire had awakened in my heart to become either a teacher or a preacher. Although I could see no possibility for becoming either because my father did not have the means, I could not rid myself of this desire. I

dreamed of it at night. I already then had the knowledge that things which are impossible to man were not impossible to God. Hence I took my refuge to God in prayer not only at night when I retired but often during the daytime, beneath the open sky, I would take off my cap, sit or kneel beside a tree, and pray to God that he might open the way so that I could study and become a teacher or preacher. My prayer was not in vain. A few days after my confirmation, our minister, a venerable, old man, came to my father in our home and sought to persuade him to send me to a higher school of learning. The minister said that for a while I should attend a preparatory school about five miles from my birthplace and later on he would arrange to have me attend a higher institution. My father agreed and sent me to the high school.

“How I rejoiced that my prayer had been answered! I gladly shouldered all the difficulties that were in the way. In order to save the board bill, during the first year I walked the five miles to school every morning carrying my dinner; and in the evening I marched home again. This was no small undertaking, especially in winter when the snow was deep and the path had not been broken. The following year my father was able to pay my board, and I was very glad. But during the third year, as winter approached my father declared that he was unable either to pay my board or to give me the money necessary for a few books. I talked it over with my teacher, and told him that I would have to give up my studies. ‘Well,’ said my teacher, ‘I will think about it and see whether anything can be done.’ The next morning when I came to school and had greeted my teacher, he said to me, ‘Last night I considered your circumstances for a long time and now believe I have found a way in which you can help yourself. About an hour’s walk from here there is a little village which has a teacher for instructing the children only during the winter. I can secure this position for you. Generally the teacher takes turns about in lodging at the homes of the children attending; hence you need pay no board and will be able to earn something. You can study your lessons each evening, and in the morning before

you leave I will hear you recite. In this way you will be able to keep pace with your classmates here.' The plan just suited me. At once we went to the little village, and immediately a contract was made with the heads of the families to the effect that I should teach school for five months for twenty-two Guldens (about nine dollars). Every morning I walked the three miles to the village, taught the school, and returned in the evening. In the evening I generally studied my lessons until twelve o'clock, and recited them to my teacher the next morning at five or six o'clock. Then I would start to the little village to teach. The people were generally poor and had the custom of eating very early and very late. This did not suit me very well, for I could neither be there early in the morning nor remain until late in the evening. Therefore I contented myself with one meal a day during this winter. The daily tramp of three miles going and three miles back; the terrible cold which I had to endure, for I had neither cloak nor overcoat; the constant pangs of hunger that I suffered, caused me to grow so thin that in the spring when I returned home my parents thought I must have consumption.

"Now the thought awoke in me to go to America, whither two others of the students were also planning to go. I announced my decision to my parents. My father was willing but mother did not want me to go. On the 18th of April, 1831, when I said farewell to parents and brothers and sisters, my mother said: 'I would rather see you carried out of the house in a coffin than see you go to America.' My journey lasted nearly four months from April 18 to August 16."

The first part of the journey was made largely on foot. By easy stages young Herbruck wandered through northwestern France, a distance of about four hundred miles to Havre. There a several weeks' wait ensued until an old French sailing vessel started for America. After being out several days a terrific storm broke over the vessel, tearing away the masts and creating general havoc aboard the old ship. The ship was so much injured that it had to be towed back to Plymouth, England, by another vessel. Another long delay ensued while

the vessel was being repaired when a second start was made for America. Storms and reverses again pursued the ship, but finally the friendly coast of America loomed on the horizon. Here we will let Mr. Herbruck resume his narrative:

"On the 16th of August 1831, I landed in Philadelphia and trod for the first time on American soil. The next day I left Philadelphia, without a cent in my pocket and only the clothes which I had worn for four months during the entire journey. I had brought good clothes and a few books with me but these I had left with a man whom I owed about twelve dollars. The third night I lay, as Jacob once did, beneath the open sky, upon a pile of shavings as my bed, and the infinite canopy of heaven as my blanket. But I had no sweet dreams, I saw no ladder reaching to heaven upon which the angels of God ascended and descended. I was homesick and ill, thought of my mother and wished I had taken her advice. I could not sleep all night, but lay there with a high fever and headache. No father nor mother, no brother nor sister was beside my bed to nurse me, or to hand me even so much as a cup of water. Of the things that passed through my heart and mind, I will be silent. Only this I will say that almost the entire night was spent in weeping and prayer. And my prayer again was not in vain. The second day thereafter the Lord brought me another father and mother. It was in Berks County, in Heidelberg Twp., that an aged couple took me into their home and became to me as father and mother. Father Klopp who thus received me was eighty-one years old, a good and pious soul, as was also mother Klopp. Family worship was held each morning and evening. Father Klopp clothed me from head to foot. I taught school there during the winter, and did a little work mornings and evenings. In the spring when school was closed, I asked the old father what I owed him for clothes and board. He inquired, and I shall never forget that moment: How much money have you? I told him that I had about forty dollars. Then he said, Give me your hand and promise that you will remain a godly youth and serve the Lord. I gave my promise. Now, he said, you owe me nothing else; go in the name of

God, and the Lord be with you. Having thanked these good people for all that they had done for me, I took my departure. My intention was to visit a friend in the town of Lebanon; but beyond that I did not know what I should do. Before I reached Lebanon, however, I met upon the road four or five wagons covered with white canvas. On the canvas in black letters stood the name, Ohio. I found that there were several families moving to Ohio. Several young men of my age were walking behind the wagons. I soon became acquainted with them and they invited me to travel with them to Ohio. Before Lebanon was reached these young fellows and I had become such good friends that I decided to go with them. I did not visit my friend but travelled straight ahead towards Ohio. These families intended to go to southern Ohio, and at last we reached the Ohio River. While the people were engaged in getting the wagons upon a ferry boat to cross the river, a man who had been standing upon the bank stepped up to me and asked, Are you a German? Yes, sir, was my answer. Where are you going? was his further inquiry. My answer was, To southern Ohio. Do you have a profession? he then asked. I answered, No, but during last winter I taught school in eastern Pennsylvania. Well, he said, then you travel with me to northern Ohio, that is the proper place for you.

"I cannot tell why I did it, nevertheless, even though my travelling companions had become very dear to me, I tore myself from them, and went with this stranger. We travelled together to New Lisbon. From there we went towards the north to Mahoning County where my travelling companion was at home. When we were about three miles north of New Lisbon we came to a fine spring of water by the roadside. We slaked our thirst and rested there a while. I had a little prayer book in my pocket, and said to my travelling companion who was a Catholic, If you have no objections I will read a prayer. He answered, It is agreeable to me. I read a prayer. Suddenly something strange seemed to be going on within me. I cannot describe the experience. It was as though I heard a voice saying: 'You are going the wrong way. Mahoning



County is not the place for you to go. Go back.' I began to weep, not knowing what I should do. My companion asked, What ails you? My answer was, I cannot travel on with you. I wish to go back to New Lisbon. The man tried everything to persuade me from this intention; but it was no use. I offered him my hand and tore myself loose from him. Having reached New Lisbon, I made no inquiries concerning any road, for I did not know whither I would go. When I believed myself to be in the center of the town, I turned towards the right, not knowing whither this road would bring me. I came to Canton and remained a few hours, looking around for an opportunity to learn some trade. Not finding anything, I went on at once. On the west side of the town, I sat down along the way under a tree. Suddenly my heart became so burdened that I began to weep. What will become of you? Your money has been spent in travelling, all but eight dollars, and the farther you go, the more sparsely the land is inhabited. I lay beneath the tree about two hours, weeping and praying. After I had thus exhausted myself in weeping, I arose and went on. But before three miles had been traversed, I again had a father and a mother. I taught school again, having the children of a number of families, and in the household of Father Wirth I had my home. Father and Mother Wirth treated me like their own child and to the children in the home I was as a brother."

The tree beneath which young Herbruck wept and prayed was located near Tuscarawas Street, just beyond West Creek. To the end of his life Rev. Herbruck would point out the spot occasionally to his friends, and repeat the story of how God answered his prayers.

The Wirth family lived near Reedurban. With them Mr. Herbruck resided several months teaching school and studying theology and practicing at sermon writing under the direction of Rev. Benjamin Faust. During the last weeks of Rev. Faust's life, Mr. Herbruck made his home with them and preached for his teacher regularly.



## CHAPTER VIII

### PETER HERBRUCK'S EXPERIENCES BEFORE HIS ORDINATION

BEFORE considering the development of events in the congregations belonging to the Canton charge, a glimpse must be taken at the fortunes of the village itself. Canton was incorporated in 1822, but ten years later it was still a primitive, inland community of less than two thousand souls. The only means of communication with the outside world at that time were poor dirt roads almost impassible during some seasons of the year. Business was largely carried on by barter, and cash money was exceedingly rare. Until the Ohio Canal was completed through Massillon in 1830, there was no cash market at all for grain. As a consequence oats, corn, and wheat had but a small value and could be readily traded in for twelve, fifteen, and twenty-five cents a bushel respectively. Before the canal was finished the only way to market grain was to haul it to Pittsburgh or the Ohio River; afterwards Massillon became a large grain center. Trade was thus diverted from Canton and business suffered greatly.

It was not until 1829 that the first coal-stoves replaced the open fire-places and the homemade contrivances in use. Coal was brought from Pike Township to the south of Canton. Customs and fashions were still very simple and democratic. Calico was the prevailing material for ladies' fine dresses to be worn for calls, parties and religious services; while home-spun was generally worn about the house. Milliners had not yet invaded the village; their work as well as that of the dress-makers was performed by the women who happened to be handiest with the needle. Walking and horse-back riding was the general mode of conveyance. Women as well as men became expert in handling horses. The people in Canton, as well as in the country congregations were poor, or just emerging from poverty. One-room log cabins constituted the ordin-

ary farmhouse; a two-room cabin gave indications of increasing wealth; a three-room house was luxury.

Such were some of the village conditions that confronted young Herbruck at the death of his preceptor. Having become inured to hardships, however, these gave him no concern; but the situation in the charge itself was both difficult and discouraging. Rev. Faust had been favorably known throughout the county and had been exceptionally able as a pastor and preacher; while Herbruck was a stranger not yet twenty years old. Furthermore his entire education and experience for the work of the ministry had consisted in reading a few theological books under the direction of Rev. Faust for about three months; supplemented by writing about a half dozen sermons and preaching perhaps a dozen times. He was further handicapped by being able to speak only the German language, and being unfamiliar with American ways and customs. Besides this, as he confesses in his "Reminiscences," he was exceedingly timid and desperately poor. Under the most favorable circumstances he could not hope to be ordained to the ministry before he was of age and that date was still fifteen months off.

The congregations of the charge at once began the search for a new pastor. Until this search should be crowned with success, Mr. Herbruck was invited by the various congregations to continue the regular preaching services and to instruct the youth in the catechism. For the special ministerial acts such as administering the sacraments and confirming the young people, Rev. J. W. Hamm was called upon. Rev. Hamm was pastor of the Manchester charge near Canal Fulton and was not only the nearest neighboring pastor, but also supervised the theological studies which young Herbruck was diligently continuing.

The hardships of that first winter were such that they would have driven him from the work in utter discouragement had he not been so certain of his divine call to the ministry. He gives us a glimpse of some of his experiences in the following words:

"I made nearly all my trips on foot, because I was too

poor to buy a horse. Neither did I possess an overcoat or mantle. During the winter I walked eight, ten, fifteen and even twenty-four miles, on foot, through deep snows. Often I slept under a so-called clapboard roof, and in the morning could easily write my name in the snow on my bed covers. In addition to the Canton congregation, I served for two years two congregations in Carroll County. The one in the town of Carrollton about twenty-four miles from Canton and the other known as the Hursh Church five miles north of Carrollton. I preached every four weeks in each congregation, at the one in the morning, and in the afternoon at the other. Generally I would return home after the close of the afternoon service; reaching Canton at eleven or twelve o'clock and even later, according to the condition of the roads. In another congregation I also preached for nine months. During these nine months, I made the trip ten times, travelling nine miles there and nine miles back. For preaching ten times and traveling 180 miles on foot I received the handsome sum of \$1.50, that is fifteen cents a sermon plus a trip of eighteen miles. In my time I preached to twenty-one different congregations, but this one was the stingiest of them all."

During these months the charge was diligently seeking for a permanent pastor. The Uniontown congregation elected Rev. J. W. Hamm and thus separated from the Canton charge to become a part of the Manchester charge. The remaining congregations of the charge decided to extend a call to Rev. David Winters, who was then serving the Dayton charge; or, if he would not accept the call, it was to go to Rev. David Long, then serving the four or five congregations of the Somerset charge in Perry County. As both these men preached acceptably in both German and English they were eminently fitted for the work of the Canton charge. A request was therefore sent to the Ohio Synod which met in the spring of 1833 to confirm this action and arrange for the installation of the one or the other of these ministers. In case neither of them would accept the offered call, a further request was sent asking that Peter Herbruck should be licensed and ordained so that he

might become the pastor of the Canton charge. The consistories furnished him with the necessary recommendations and petitions and sent him to the meeting of the Synod of Xenia.

High hopes filled young Herbruck's heart as he prepared to go to Synod. Had he not for a space of six months faithfully preached the Gospel to the people? Had he not zealously conducted the catechetical classes? Had he not diligently continued his theological studies, and had not the consistories given him splendid testimonials? Possibly it hardly occurred to him that his youth and insufficient preparation might make it necessary for Synod to postpone both his licensure and ordination. Of the journey Mr. Herbruck says:

"A week before the convening of the Synod I started out carrying with me good recommendations and a request from the consistory of the Canton charge. On foot I went to Massillon, from there on a canal boat to Columbus, and then again on foot to Xenia. The road between Columbus and Xenia was so miserable that I could hardly get on; and was obliged to rest at a farmhouse along the road for an entire day. At last I reached the goal of my journey. The Synod was already in session. I presented my documents and a committee was appointed to examine me."

The committee appointed to conduct the examination reported to the Synod that they had examined the candidate in church history and theology, and found that he was not yet ready for licensure. The Synod thereupon appointed a committee of which Rev. J. W. Hamm was chairman which should supervise Mr. Herbruck's further studies, and, if in their opinion, the candidate, before the next meeting of Synod was sufficiently prepared, the committee was authorized to issue a ministerial license to him.

This action of the Synod was a grievous disappointment to the young candidate for licensure; especially because Rev. Winters declined the call issued to him, and Rev. Long was uncertain whether he would ultimately accept or not. The Synod requested Rev. Long to visit the congregations in and around Canton during the summer as a sort of official supply-

pastor until the matter was definitely settled. Before this plan could be carried out, the cholera scourge which swept over Ohio that year, claimed him also as a victim less than a month after the meeting of Synod.

Rev. Herbruck believed to the end of his days that the action of the Synod in refusing to license him in 1833 was caused not so much by his youth, or his lack of preparation, as by the determination to withhold the license so that one of the older and experienced pastors might secure the desirable charge.

In describing his experiences at the Synod and afterwards, he says: "Even before the examination I heard remarks here and there to the effect that the young man would not do for the Canton charge, and that someone else must be stationed there. The examination was held. I do not know what the committee reported, as I was not permitted to be present during the hearing and discussion of the report. After the adoption of the report I was called in and informed that the Synod had decided that I should study a while longer under the care of Rev. Hamm, who would examine me again when he thought proper. The entire matter looked somewhat queer to me, but I was unable to alter it. Rev. Hamm not being present, the resolution of the synod was sent to him. I talked the matter over with a minister of the Synod and he quieted me by saying: Be perfectly contented. When Rev. Hamm calls the committee together in a few weeks, everything will be all right. I perceived that there was something back of it all, but what it was, I could not tell. At the close of the Synod I started out (*per pedes apostolorum*) on foot for Columbus. After having walked some distance one of the brethren of Synod caught up with me riding in a double rig, and also on his way to Columbus. I expected an invitation to ride along with him as far as Columbus. But instead of that he called out, goodbye, and hurried past. Reaching Columbus, I again went aboard a canal boat and rode to Massillon, and from there went on foot to Canton. Hardly had I reached Canton when I was informed by a member of the consistory that a minister, whom



I had met at the Synod, was coming to preach a trial sermon and become a candidate for the Canton charge. Now I saw clearly why I was still to study for a while under Rev. Hamm. The minister came, preached to several of the congregations of the charge, and demanded that an election should be held. So the congregations voted between him and me with the result that I was elected by a large majority."

Some months later in the fall of 1833, Rev. Hamm called his committee together at Manchester, and the coveted license was granted at last.

It may have been partly from sheer gladness that he was finally in possession of his ministerial license that Mr. Herbruck decided to get married. For some months before the death of Rev. Faust, he had become a member of the Faust household, giving his time to study and assisting in the work of the parish. After Rev. Faust's death he remained with the Faust family. About a mile or so further east on the Georgetown road was the farm of Jonathan Holwick. In the Holwick home there was a daughter named Sarah, then about sixteen years old. Peter and Sarah soon became interested in one another. Interest quickly ripened into love, and love led to a happy marriage on November 21, 1832. The ceremony was performed by Rev. J. W. Hamm. The groom was three months less than twenty-one years of age, and the bride was just sixteen and one-half. During the first year of their married life, the young couple made their home with the bride's parents. Over the spring which supplied the household, a little house had been built. The upper part of this spring-house had a room which had been used for various purposes. This room was now fixed up and became the study where the young preacher worked over his books and sermons, and grappled with vexing pastoral problems. And these came thick and fast.

On the day following the wedding an event occurred which made a profound impression upon the entire community and especially upon the youthful candidate for the ministry. Christian Bechtel, a German, who may possibly have been a member or at least an adherent of one of the congregations served by



Rev. Herbruck, had come home drunk some months before, and in this senseless condition had killed his wife while she was sleeping. After an attempt to escape he gave himself up, and was condemned to death. Under a deep sense of his duty towards the wretched man, Mr. Herbruck says:

"I often visited him in prison, and admonished him to repentance and conversion, and also prayed with him. His sin was a heavy burden upon his heart, and he fervently besought the Lord for pardon. According to his own testimony, he also received mercy and forgiveness."

The conversion of the criminal and the remarkable confession which he drew up stirred the entire county to the very depths. The confession closed with these words, "Standing as I do on the confines of two worlds, I would fain raise my voice in the language of warning and exhortation, to all who may hear the tale of my guilt and its consequences. Let them shun the rock on which I split, avoid the intoxicating cup as you would the enemy of your souls. To that I can safely trace my present condition."

The execution was to take place on November 22, 1833. On the evening before, a minister who had but recently come from Germany visited Mr. Herbruck. "This minister directly denied the divinity of Christ. The next morning we went together to the prison. Seven or eight ministers were gathered there. The condemned man begged us to pray with him again. After the prayer, he himself also began to pray. His prayer was so earnest and fervent, that the bystanders were moved to tears. I noticed that during this prayer, my guest who denied the divinity of Christ, dropped his hat, and repeatedly smote his breast."

At eleven o'clock, the condemned man was led out to execution. Rev. J. P. Mahnenschmidt and Peter Herbruck walked by his side. The gallows had been erected on the commons just east of Walnut Street, between Fourth and Sixth Streets, N. E. A multitude estimated to have numbered at least twenty thousand, coming from far and near, had assembled. After an English sermon had been preached, Rev. Mah-

nenschmidt preached in German and "closed the service with prayer." During this time, Mr. Herbruck and his guest had stood side by side. The criminal's last words were, "May the blood of Jesus Christ the son of God cleanse me from all sin." This scene quite vanquished the visitor's unbelief. With the tears streaming from his eyes, he exclaimed: "You are right, would to God, I had your faith."

During that winter Mr. Herbruck performed all the usual pastoral duties of the charge. By his discreet conduct and the faithful performance of his work he so won the hearts of the people that when the Ohio Synod met in Canton, May 17-21, 1834, seven of the congregations, namely, Peter's, Zion's, Paris, Bethlehem, Martin's, Carrollton and Hursh\* submitted a call to Peter Herbruck, asking that the call might be confirmed and he be ordained and installed as their pastor. The remaining congregations of the charge, that is, Canton, Osnaburg, Warstlers (or Heinrichs) and Sherman's had been supplied for some time by Rev. John Pence, and having given him a call desired that he might be installed as their pastor. The Synod granted this petition provided that Rev. Pence would accept the call.

During this meeting of the Synod Peter Herbruck, who had now become of age, was finally licensed and ordained to the ministry, and with him also two other candidates, G. H. Zumpf and Geo. Schlosser. The ordination of three candidates for the ministry at one service was so extraordinary an event that a congregation that crowded the church had assembled (May 21). Rev. T. Winters delivered a short but interesting and touching address on the words found in John 21: 16, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep." After the ordination had taken place, "the

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\* In the statistical report of 1834, Baiden's schoolhouse is also named as a congregation belonging to the Canton charge. At that time however, this was simply an occasional preaching point, the organization of the congregation taking place at a later date. The correct spelling of the name is "Bethunds." The location was four miles north of North Georgetown, in Columbiana County.

congregation united in a song of praise, while the clerical brethren came forward, and, amidst praise and joy, gave these newly initiated brethren into the ministry the right hand of fellowship, and with hearts full of joy, and amidst sighs, tears, and praises of God, offered them pastoral advice and congratulations." The entire service was then closed by a prayer of which a few sentences ought to be preserved here, "Almighty and eternal God,—O, thou great Head and Bishop of thy Church, Jesus Christ, bless what we have done in accordance with thy holiness, that it may redound to thy glory, and the building up of that part of thy Zion which we represent. Give to each one of thy spirit and grace, that we, patiently and faithfully, may do the work of evangelists, and make full proof of our ministry.—Bless them (the newly ordained candidates) and us with the greatest and richest of thy blessings in time, and when our pilgrimage shall end, receive us to thee and the church of the first-born in heaven; for the Redeemer's sake."\*

With this service of ordination, the ministry of Rev. Peter Herbruck, which was to extend to more than a half century, really began.

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\* The report of the ordination service is taken from the Minutes of the Ohio Synod. The quotations in Rev. Herbruck's words are taken verbatim from his "Reminiscences."

CHAPTER IX  
GETTING SETTLED IN THE CHARGE  
1834-1837

ONE of the first acts of the new minister was to hurry to the courthouse and secure his license permitting and empowering him to perform marriage ceremonies. The license issued by the Court of Common Pleas stated, "You are hereby licensed to solemnize marriages within the state of Ohio and so long as you shall continue a regular minister of the German Reformed Church." For this license a fee of one dollar had to be paid.

A second very important matter that had to be attended to was the drawing up of a brief contract between the minister and each congregation. Sometimes this contract consisted simply in a verbal understanding of the obligations resting upon either party; more often it was drawn up in a dignified legal fashion. The following agreement made between the Osnaburg congregation and its minister will serve as an example of the manner in which these were worded.

"We, the undersigned, members of the German Evangelical Reformed Church of Osnaburg, Stark County, Ohio, obligate ourselves to pay to the Rev'd Peter Herbruck the amount opposite to our name, either in person or through the consistory for the year extending from ——— to ———.

"On his part the Rev'd Peter Herbruck obligates himself to preach every ——— weeks in German unless prevented by sickness, or other extraordinary occurrences, such as funerals, attendance on Synod, etc., and to baptize the children, confirm the youth, administer the Lord's supper, and look after the spiritual welfare of the congregation."

It will be remembered from the last chapter that the Canton, Osnaburg, Warstler, and Sherman's congregations of the

Canton charge had extended a call to Rev. John Pence. When he finally declined the call and these congregations were shepherdless the consistories of Canton, Osnaburg, and Warstlers arranged with Rev. Herbruck to supply their pulpits until definite arrangements were agreed upon. The Sherman's congregation, however, chose the Rev. Geo. Schlosser.

During the fall of this year, Rev. Herbruck moved to town into the new home which had been built at the corner of Tuscarawas and Herbruck Streets, N. E. This house which is now number 1003 Tuscarawas Street, East, stands today as it was originally built with the exception of the kitchen addition in the rear and the one-story addition on the east side. It served as the family home until death called the aged couple home; a period of sixty-three years.

About this time also, Rev. Herbruck secured a horse to carry him to his various pastoral appointments. This part of the story, however, he can tell us in his own words:

"In the fall of 1834, I finally got a horse and also an overcoat. The horse was only three years old, and not properly broken, while I was no rider. On account of my awkwardness in handling the animal the little beast acquired the habit of going backwards, whenever it was frightened. On one occasion while going home the young animal became scared and began going backwards. I tried with the whip to drive it forwards; but the more I whipped it, the faster it went backwards. A farmer working in the field along the road cried out to me: Say, preacher, turn around and point the rear end of your horse towards Canton, and you will get there faster. Falling off of the horse became so much of a daily habit with me, that when I rode away in the morning and returned in the evening, with only one or two tumbles to my credit, I counted it a lucky day.

"One experience, however, I shall never forget. I had a funeral twelve miles from Canton, and was returning home about eleven or twelve o'clock at night. I had to go through a dense woods through which there was only a very narrow



footpath. It was so dark that I could scarcely distinguish my horse's head. Some animal, probably a cow, was lying in the path, and jumped up suddenly. My horse became frightened and galloped away through the woods with me. I expected nothing else but to be killed. I tried to stop the horse and pulled with all my strength on the reins. Suddenly these broke, and I tumbled head over heels, backwards from the horse. Crawling around on hands and knees, I finally found my saddle bags, and then worked my way out of the woods. At the nearest farmhouse, I awoke the people, and asked for a lantern. The request was freely granted, but as I was about to leave, the farmer said: Hold on, possibly your horse is standing down by my barn. Sure enough, so it was. So we fixed up the bridle, and I reached home without further mishaps.

"Conditions in my congregations at that time seemed very satisfactory. The number of members was on the increase, and there were but few annoyances from without. But things were not to remain so very long."

In order to clearly set forth the conditions in the congregations of the charge and especially to show the independent manner in which the individual congregations frequently acted without consulting the others, a few of the "annoyances" that came must be described.

After Rev. John Pence had refused the call extended to him, the four congregations arranged for themselves for the supply of their pulpits as already described. The Osnaburg congregation divided into two factions. Some of the people wanted Rev. Herbruck, the others invited Rev. Geo. Schlosser to preach for them. The Bethlehem congregation in Navarre and the Sherman's congregations also invited Rev. Schlosser. The question arose: Who is the legal pastor? The matter was referred to the Synod in 1835. The answer of the Synod was in the form of a compromise. Rev. Schlosser was to serve Osnaburg until the end of the year, after which time Rev. Herbruck was to have the congregation. As a compensation for giving up Osnaburg, Rev. Schlosser was to keep the



Bethlehem and Sherman's congregations. The congregations of the Canton charge at the end of 1835 were Canton, Osnaburg, Zion's, Paris, Martin's, Warstlers (or Heinrichs), Carrollton and Hursh, with Sherman's wavering between Herbruck and Schlosser. Besides these congregations already organized there were also several additional preaching places where occasional services were held.

The Synod met in Osnaburg in 1837. In the absence of Rev. Herbruck, who was called away to conduct a funeral service in one of the distant congregations, a petition signed by only eleven members was presented requesting the Synod to declare the Canton congregation vacant because Rev. Herbruck had never been elected by the congregation, the consistory only having chosen him.

The Synod immediately, without waiting until Rev. Herbruck was present, referred the matter to a committee. The elder from Canton was appointed on this committee. It may be that the ministerial delegates had been more verbose than usual; it may be that the dinner had been too sumptuous; at any rate, the Canton elder was just taking a quiet nap. Suddenly someone poked him in the ribs and whispered: You are on the committee in the Canton matter. Immediately he jumped to his feet exclaiming, "Mr. President, I can't go to Canton; my horse is a couple of miles from here in a pasture." The president explained that the committee was not to go to Canton, but do its work in Osnaburg. So the elder declared, "Well, then I will serve."

The committee having investigated the matter reported: "We cannot consider Bro. Herbruck as legally called pastor of said congregation because he has received his call from the consistory only, and not by a majority of the congregation; but if the congregation chooses to retain him as their minister, or to call any other, let them declare it by a majority of the votes of the whole congregation."

When the committee offered its report to the Synod it was adopted without any discussion except by the elder from Canton. He did not seem to be able to understand why the elec-

tion by the consistory should not be considered quite sufficient. He recalled how the consistory had twice (the first time when he was elected provided neither Revs. Winter or Long would accept the call; the second time, after Rev. Pence had declined the call extended him) already elected Rev. Herbruck to serve the Canton charge, hence to order still another election by the congregation seemed to him to be a work of supererogation. He was "a unique Pennsylvania German" as Rev. Herbruck designates him; so he got up and made the following speech as reported in the Herbruck "Reminiscences": "Gentlemen, We have had two elections already. The first time Peter won it; and the second time Peter won it again." However, this laconic plea did not change the fact that the congregation had never been given a chance to vote whether Rev. Herbruck was to be the pastor or not; hence, the report of the committee was adoptd.

Taking all the circumstances of the case into consideration it is evident that the Ohio Synod showed Rev. Herbruck but scant courtesy in this matter. In the first place since the Synod was meeting in a congregation of the Canton charge, the question certainly should not have been disposed of in the absence of the pastor who was acting as the host of Synod. Secondly, on his return an opportunity should have been accorded him to be heard. This was denied him with the statement: "It is too late now." Thirdly, the petition itself with the signatures was not properly investigated. Had this been done it would have been seen, "that of the eleven signers, several were Lutherans, several called themselves Reformed but had not belonged to the Canton congregation for a number of years, the rest were relatives of a certain minister who was anxious to secure the congregation for himself, and hence furnished the incentive for this entire occurrence." Since the Synod had decided that the congregation must hold an election for pastor, this "certain minister" at once announced himself as a candidate. "An election was held, and, behold, "Peter won again." (The quotations are all taken from the Herbruck Reminiscences.)

During this time Rev. Herbruck was engaged in zealous missionary activity. The names of several new congregations appear in the statistical reports. These were Israel, Franklin (several miles east of Paris), Georgetown in Columbiana Co., Bethund's (also spelled Baden's and Baiden's) schoolhouse four miles north of Georgetown. For an account of this work, Rev. Herbruck's own description will be given:

"About the year 1837 I began to preach in the town of Franklin near the eastern boundary of Stark County, and founded a new congregation there. A year later, I received an invitation to come to North Georgetown in Columbiana County. I went there and preached in an old log church. The people begged me earnestly to come regularly every four weeks and preach to them. I promised to do so provided they would build a new church. They agreed to do that and before the close of the first year the new church was completed. Soon after, I served the Bethund's congregation located four miles north of Georgetown. I preached at these places for several years and both were in a flourishing condition when I gave them up. During my administration there I received a considerable number of persons by confirmation into the congregation. But I had to make some hard trips, because both congregations were about twenty-three miles from Canton. When it was impossible to leave home on the previous day, which happened frequently, I was obliged to start out at one or two o'clock on Sunday morning. One of my return trips from there I have not forgotten. It was night, and I had to pass through a woods four miles across. Just as I got into the woods, a violent storm broke loose accompanied by a pouring rain and frightful lightning flashes. About a mile beyond the woods, I had to cross a valley, which was flooded. The road was narrow and the fences on either side were barely visible anymore. I believed it possible to cross if I kept in the middle of the road with my horse and buggy. After having reached the middle of the valley I suddenly thought of the bridge which led across a little stream there. I thought that the bridge must have been carried away. Suddenly I seemed

to hear a voice saying: Do not go a step further, you are in great danger; but it was impossible owing to the narrowness of the road to turn around. There was no other way to escape except to back out of the valley with horse and buggy which took several hours to accomplish. Then I was obliged to take a long round-about way which did not bring me home until sunrise the next morning. On the way home, I learned that the bridge had actually been carried away."

Rev. J. G. Buettner, D.D., who lived in Canton from 1838-39 and served the Osnaburg congregation and the German Evangelical congregation of Massillon, gives many vivid descriptions of church conditions in Stark County and the experiences of ministers during that period, in his book, "My Life and Journeys in North America." Describing a typical Sunday he says: "When there is no one to lead the singing, which happens frequently, then the minister must almost contract consumption on account of his much singing and preaching. After the morning service he jumps on his horse, chases five to seven miles to another congregation where the same labor must be repeated. Soaked by rain, covered by mud, with teeth chattering from the cold, or in summertime panting from the heat, the pulpit is entered to conduct the service. Then perhaps there are several children to be baptized at different homes, or without a moment's warning the minister may be asked to conduct a funeral service."

Owing to the strenuous pioneer conditions education was greatly neglected. The interests and thoughts of the people moved in narrow circles; as a consequence the thinking was apt to be very crude, and the manners rude and familiar. Plain sermons, in homely speech and with everyday illustrations found greatest acceptance. If the words were accompanied with vigorous gestures and loud tones so much the better. "Furthermore if the minister with a pious demeanor was also somewhat careless as to his outward appearance, and possessed a jovial and familiar manner he speedily became popular. This popularity was still further enhanced if he could swing an ax vigorously, handle a plow dexterously, perform all the usual

work on the farm, and unhesitatingly mounted a load of manure and drove to the field. Then the farmers estimated him as a true apostle." A common pastime of the people was to put catch questions to the minister to test his orthodoxy. Frequently during or at the close of a sermon some "brother" would take the pastor to task and controvert some point in the sermon.

Rev. Herbruck during these first years had a great variety of such annoyances. Several of these will be given.

The majority of his parishioners were Pennsylvania Germans, and so frequently misunderstood the meaning of his high German sermons. On one occasion he was emphasizing the necessity of starting a German school. To make the matter still more impressive he said among other things, "We need not be ashamed to be Germans. Where was printing discovered? In Germany. Who invented gunpowder? A German, etc., etc." Unfortunately some of the American Germans failed to grasp the purpose of the sermon, and scattered the news that the preacher had declared that Americans were not worth a shot of powder. Great indignation broke out. In order to set matters right it was necessary for Rev. Herbruck to draw up a written statement, signed by a number of intelligent people, denying the rumors which were being circulated. In spite of all this the enmity engendered endured for some years.

Again when the cornerstone of the Zion's church was laid Rev. Herbruck was invited to dinner by one of the members. Upon leaving the minister said, "You and your wife come and see me sometime; but not during the next three weeks for I am going to Synod and then will visit in Pennsylvania, and will not get back until three weeks from next Thursday." Then the minister promptly dismissed the matter from his mind. But not so the erstwhile host. Promptly on Thursday morning three weeks later he arrived with his wife for dinner. Now it had so happened that Rev. Herbruck and his wife had been called away by some church duties on that day, nevertheless their absence greatly incensed the man. He left exclaiming,



"Na, that's a nice preacher; here he invites a fellow to come and eat with him, and when you come he isn't at home. I'll never visit him again." So he stayed away from church for two months. Suddenly one Sunday morning he appeared again. After the benediction, while the congregation was still assembled, he broke out, "I can't stand for such a preacher as Herbruck is any longer. I know something entirely too evil about him." Then the man hurried from the church. Immediately some of the leading members surrounded the pastor and inquired as to the meaning of the scene. Rev. Herbruck told them that the only possible cause known to him for the outbreak was his absence from home when the man had called with his wife to visit the preacher. The bystanders contended that the man could not be so foolish, that there must be some other cause. So a delegation was formed to go out and interview him. Sure enough, the only cause of grievance was as the minister had stated. The burst of laughter that greeted the foolish fellow so nettled him, that he asserted, "Well, I know something still worse." So Rev. Herbruck asked: Now, what is that? The answer came, "You have said that your horse was never fed at the church." The minister then asked the bystanders: Did you ever have any oats in the barn during the summer? (The barn was beside the church and was used for putting up the horses during the services.) "No." Did you ever feed my horse? "No." Then, have I told an untruth? "No." But the man was not so easily subdued and declared, "Well, you should not have said so anyhow, and especially to a Methodist preacher." The consequence was that he held a grudge against the pastor for years.

Just one more incident will be given. One Sunday afternoon, Rev. Herbruck was invited to stay over night at the home of a member of one of the distant congregations. He declined, saying that he had left a sick child at home and must hurry back. On the way home he met Rev. Schlosser who informed him that the child was much better. Then Rev. Herbruck accepted the invitation of another member to remain over night. When this news reached the first man, he became furious and

called the preacher a liar and some other things. The gossip became so serious, that Rev. Herbruck had to make a public explanation from the pulpit of the facts, and present a written certificate signed by Rev. Schlosser stating that his original plan of going home had only been altered by the information given by Rev. Schlosser that the child was out of danger.

During this period the relations between the Reformed and Lutheran denominations and ministers were very close. The Ohio Synod and the Lutheran Synod interchanged delegates from the beginning. In 1834 the Ohio Synod "accepts with rejoicing" the offer of the Lutherans to admit Reformed students for the ministry to their seminary at Columbus "with common and equal privileges." A few years later the Ohio Synod declared itself in favor of an organic union with the Lutheran Synod in these words, "We are convinced of the infinite benefit of such a union, not only as it concerns the congregations but also for the ministers." A committee on union was also appointed. Nothing came of this movement, mainly because the Lutheran ministers were unwilling to enter into such a union. Many of the congregations and pastors of both denominations, however, were working together in perfect harmony. Rev. Herbruck in the union congregations used either the Reformed or the Lutheran catechism for his catechetical instruction, according to the preference of the catechumens. On the days when the Reformed minister was officiating at one of the other congregations, his Lutheran colleague would instruct the union class from both catechisms. There is also abundant evidence that Rev. Herbruck frequently confirmed those who preferred the Lutheran faith as Lutherans, and the rest as Reformed at the same service.

A little incident which occurred at one of the meetings of the Synod deserves to be given here. Each elder who was sent as a delegate by a charge would be called upon to answer any questions which might be put concerning conditions in the congregations. One of these delegates who was in attendance for the first time was asked by the president of the Synod: "And how is your minister getting along?" He answered: "Well,

he is getting along pretty good, he already has a cow and a pig." My dear brother, said the president, preserving his gravity with difficulty, we do not inquire about that, but rather, how does the congregation like the minister? Quite unabashed, the elder answered: "Oh, as to that, we like him awful well." (Wir gleichen ihn arg gut.)

## CHAPTER X

### THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN OHIO

THE title of this chapter was the official name of the first educational institution of the Reformed Church west of the Pennsylvania boundary. This institution was located in Canton, possessed just one teacher who was ordained in our church as theological professor, and after a precarious existence of about eighteen months, quietly died.

This movement to found a seminary in Canton was of so much importance in itself, and the relations between the movement and the Canton charge were so close that some of the chief facts concerning this seminary project must be presented.

Most of the ministers in Ohio during the first third of the last century were men who had very meager educational advantages, and could make but small claim to scholarship. Their preparation for the ministry consisted for the most part in reading a few theological books and books of sermons under the direction of some older minister, writing a few sermons, and immediately going out and trying the sermon on some audience. The dearth of ministers was so great that every man who could speak with some acceptance was quickly chosen by a congregation. The Synod was very lenient in its educational requirements and ordinarily ordained every man who had received a call and whose character was above reproach. The clergy so trained had but little real scholarship, but were generally men of good common-sense, knowledge of human nature from practical experience, and possessed a keen understanding of the needs of the people. Nevertheless the necessity of an educational institution for training a sufficient number of ministers became yearly more insistent.

As early as 1833 the Ohio Synod had declared its intention "of establishing an institution for the education of worthy

young men for the Gospel ministry, that the vacant places of the West may be filled with the Word and Gospel of life." However, the Synod was too weak numerically and the congregations were too poor financially to carry out the project. Two years later the West Pennsylvania Classis, also feeling the need of a seminary in the West, entered into negotiations with the Ohio Synod concerning the feasibility of uniting into one body and thus maintaining a seminary together. As a result of these negotiations the Ohio Synod and the West Pennsylvania Classis met together in Osnaburg in 1837, and a new organization was effected to be known as "The High German Evangelical-Reformed Synod of Ohio and Adjacent States." A plan for founding a Theological Seminary was also proposed, but definite action was deferred until the next annual meeting.

One of the ministers of the West Pennsylvania Classis in attendance at Osnaburg was Rev. John Godfrey Buettner. Rev. Buettner had received his theological training in Germany, having studied in the universities at Leipsic and Jena, and received the degree of doctor of philosophy from the latter institution in 1834. The same year he also came to America and was licensed and ordained by the West Pennsylvania Classis the following spring. The Classis appointed him as a missionary among the Germans, and for two years he travelled in Ohio, and as far west as St. Louis; another journey carried him to some of the eastern states. After the meeting at Osnaburg he was instructed to continue his missionary explorations and travel in the states of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, according to his own judgment and pleasure. In travelling westward from Pittsburgh, Dr. Buettner came again to Osnaburg only a few months after his previous visit.

In the last chapter it was stated that the congregation at Osnaburg had been divided into two factions; the one desiring Rev. Geo. Schlosser, the other Rev. Peter Herbruck. The Synod in 1835 had decided the controversy by declaring that the congregation should belong to Rev. Herbruck from New Year's day in 1836. The Schlosser faction, however, seems to have paid no attention to this decision and Rev. Schlosser con-



tinued preaching until the summer of 1837. The feeling of the two factions towards one another cannot have been very pleasant, and finally Rev. Schlosser decided to give up Osnaburg. Just at this juncture Dr. Buettner visited Osnaburg the second time, intending to remain only a day or two. He was asked to preach again; the two factions were willing to unite and extend him a call to become pastor, and after some hesitation he decided to remain. This meant an abandoning of his missionary travels; but, as he says "The congregation promised a salary of \$100.00 for the year, which was about double the best previous amount given." Of the people of the village at that time Dr. Buettner further says "Nearly all the inhabitants speak German, so that one can easily imagine himself to be in a German village. Nowhere else in the West did I find another village in which so much German was spoken."

Dr. Buettner also began to preach in Massillon. The German congregation there had been rent by factions and strife, and many of the members had left the church in disgust and refused to have anything further to do with it. Dr. Buettner was determined to try to gather the congregation together again and hence began services in the basement of the Baptist church. The audiences after some weeks began to increase, the scattered members came back, and the congregation was reorganized. A new constitution was adopted and the congregation was incorporated as "The German Evangelical-Protestant Church of Massillon." In the former constitution of the church a ludicrous article had been incorporated, reading, "Whenever the preacher preaches more than one hour it is permissible to give him a sign which, however, shall not cause any disturbance." This time-limit was omitted in the new constitution.

Dr. Buettner began his work in Osnaburg in August. The following spring the union meeting of the "Synod of Ohio and Adjacent States" was to take place at Wooster. At this meeting the proposed plan for a theological seminary was adopted and an election for professor was held. There were six nominees for the position. Dr. Buettner received seven more votes

than all the rest together. The Synod fixed his salary at \$250.00 a year provided the new professor furnished the lecture room himself; or, if the Synod furnished the room, the salary was to be \$230.00. The new seminary was to be located in Canton whither Dr. Buettner was instructed to move. He was also to continue as pastor at Osnaburg and Massillon.

Dr. Buettner sometime during the summer moved to Canton with his wife whom he had married in Osnaburg and occupied a house on the west side of Market Street, south, between Second and Third Street. The site is now occupied by the Dumont Grocery store.

The service of inauguration for the new professor took place in our church on August 14, 1838, and was in charge of Rev. Herbruck, who also read the service of installation. Rev. Geo. Schlosser led in prayer, Rev. C. L. Daubert preached the sermon, and Dr. Buettner delivered an address. "The Canton Repository" in its issue of August 23, gave the following account of the affair: "At the late meeting of the German Reformed Synod of Ohio and the congregations in connection with it from other states, among other things it was resolved to establish a theological seminary. The Rev'd Dr. J. G. Buettner was selected professor, and we are happy to learn, that for the present at least, this institution is to be located in Canton. On the 15th inst., Dr. Buettner was regularly installed Professor of the institution. We learn that active arrangements are in progress to commence operations at an early date. The citizens of Canton ought duly to appreciate the importance of such an institution, and patronize it accordingly."

The committee of the Synod who had the arrangements for the opening of the Seminary in charge also inserted a lengthy advertisement in the "Repository" which appeared in eight issues. The advertisement stated that, "The Rev'd Dr. J. G. Buettner is a man whose theological and philological acquirements recommend him to all who desire a thorough theological education and whom the committee feel proud to recommend to the Christian public for his orthodox doctrine, integrity and moral worth. All lectures will be given in the

German and English language if required, and no efforts spared to qualify students to preach in both languages."

The Seminary opened on October 1, with two students; but, owing to the ambitious and difficult course of studies which Dr. Buettner had planned, one of them stayed only three weeks and the other about one year. They then hunted up another preacher who was not quite so learned—an easy matter at that time—and studied under his direction.

Dr. Buettner during his professorship conceived the idea also that he ought to serve the Canton congregation since Rev. Herbruck had quite enough to do even without the local congregation. The manner in which he undertook to carry out his plan is vividly described by Rev. Herbruck as follows:

"For several years things had run along smoothly, when suddenly a certain Prof. B—— and the Rev. Sch—— appeared at my house. After we had dinner together, Rev. Sch—— said: "Now I will tell you why we came here. The Herr Professor would like to have your congregation here in Canton." I answered that I could not give up the congregation to the Herr Professor. The Professor then said, "If you do not give up the congregation of your own accord, I will get it anyhow."

"At that time the church building belonged jointly to the Lutherans and the Reformed. The Herr Professor went to the Lutheran minister and secured permission from him to preach on one of his Sundays, and announced his object to the Reformed people who were present. But the consistory of the Reformed congregation soon notified the Herr Professor that he could not be used. Thus this incident also was settled."

Some months after this when the Herr Professor also found himself without any students, he resigned, and returned to Germany. About the only thing that remained of the Seminary was an old-fashioned stove, which was exhibited for years as a relic of the ruined hope. Then the stove also disappeared, and the last memento of the seminary was gone.

In 1848, a second attempt was made to found an educational institution in Columbus with the name, "The Ohio Liter-

ary and Theological Institution." This attempt also did not prosper.

Finally in 1850, Heidelberg College in Tiffin was opened with seven students, in rooms rented for recitation purposes. This venture proved an immediate success, and has developed into the magnificent educational institution of Heidelberg University at Tiffin, Ohio, and Central Theological Seminary now located at Dayton, Ohio.

It is in vain now to dream of what might have been if the Canton attempt at founding an educational institution had been a success. It is useless to speculate on the tremendous loss to Canton as a community and the local Reformed congregations because the project failed. Nevertheless the thought of what we have missed in intellectual quickening, Christian culture, and educational advantage is enough to make every member of the Reformed Church here hide his face in the dust and weep bitter tears.

Reasons might be enumerated to account for the failure of the seminary here. Aside from the fact that the general church membership had but a scant appreciation of the need of such an institution and gave it very meager support, a number of other causes were also operative. Thus, Dr. Buettner was a strong union man and used all his influence to bring the Reformed and Lutheran Synods into one corporate organization. The Reformed denominational consciousness, however, was too strong, and the majority of the membership were opposed to his activities in that direction. Then also, he was a man of thorough scholarship, and planned a course of study absolutely appalling to the students who recalled the quick and easy route by which their own pastors had broken into the ministerial ranks. Besides this he could not adjust himself readily to the shocks which American customs and ways constantly gave his German predispositions. In addition, he was strongly opposed to evangelistic services, and revival meetings while many of the Ohio ministers were very much in favor of them. All these causes worked together to prevent the success of the Seminary.

The experiences through which Dr. Buettner passed as travelling missionary, pastor, and professor, he later embodied in two volumes of about four-hundred and fifty pages each, entitled "My Residence and Travels in North America." This work is especially valuable for its interesting descriptions of Reformed church-life as it was found in 1834-40. Two other books of abiding value also came from his pen, namely, "A History of the High German Reformed Church in the United States," and "A Brief History of the Reformation." After his return to Germany (1840) he continued his work as pastor to the end of his life.

During the time that Dr. Buettner lived in Canton, Rev. Herbruck zealously attended to the work of his vast parish, and even extended his missionary activities to Portage County and founded a new congregation there. Of his work and experience in connection with this new congregation, he says:

"I also founded a congregation in Portage County, twenty-two miles from Canton. A journey which I once made there, still stands out vividly in my memory. One day coming home from one of the country churches, my neighbor saw how tired my horse was. So he said to me: "Mr. Herbruck, you are killing your horse. Now I have a strong horse in the barn, that is doing nothing, use it occasionally, and let yours rest." I gladly told him that I would be delighted to accept his kind offer. Several days after, I was to conduct a funeral service in Portage County near Limaville. So I went to my neighbor and asked for his horse for the next day. "Certainly you can use it," he said, "I will bring it over early in the morning." The next morning he brought the horse over, and helped me to hitch up. A young man from Canton was to accompany me. Just as we were driving away, my neighbor said: "Mr. Herbruck, I must caution you on a certain point so that you will not become frightened if it should happen. This horse once in a while when it has to pull hard becomes stubborn and refuses to go on. In such a case just coax it a little and it will start out again." I asked whether the beast had the habit of kicking and he said, No. So we drove off. After going about three



miles, we came to a mudhole several rods across, and extending the entire width of the road. I said to my companion, Now we are in for it, you know what my neighbor said. If we drive in here and the horse stops, what will we do? He said, "I will get out of the buggy and the horse can pull you through all right." So he got out. But even so, I did not dare to drive through the mud. So I began to philosophize, thinking to myself, My neighbor says if the horse has to pull very hard, it will stop. How would it be therefore if you were to get out of the wagon and sit on the horse, and then it will not have to pull but carry you. So I got up on the horse, and drove into the mudhole. In the very middle the horse stood still. So according to the instructions of my neighbor I began to coax, but it was no use. Then I gave it a couple of jabs in the ribs with my heels. Suddenly, platsch, the horse lay down in the mud, with the preacher still sitting on top. My companion at once came to my assistance and we unhitched the horse and led it out of the mudhole. Then we pulled the buggy over ourselves and hitching up again drove on. But we both were certainly sights to behold. My boots were full of water and mud, and my trousers were mud beplastered to the knees.

"On the way I stopped at one of the deacons of the Peter's congregation. He loaned me a pair of boots, stockings and trousers. On my return I found that his wife had cleaned all my things in fine style, so I got into them and drove home. But I never borrowed that horse again."

Though it may not belong to the general subject matter of this chapter, nevertheless since it adds to an understanding of the social and church conditions of that period, the account of a missionary trip made by Rev. Herbruck in 1840 will be appended. The narrative has been considerably condensed from the original account as written down by Rev. Herbruck.

"In the year 1840 I received an invitation to visit Miami County, Ind. A number of families lived there rather close together who had formerly been members of one of my congregations. For several years they had heard no sermon there nor been able to receive the Lord's supper. So in the summer

of 1840 I started out in company with a member of the Canton congregation. We went on foot to Massillon. From there we rode by canal boat to Cleveland, and then across the lake to Toledo. As the canal was not yet completed from Toledo to Defiance we had to hire an Irishman with two horses and a spring wagon to take us to Defiance. A Catholic priest whom we had met on the boat had joined our company and together we had to pay \$4.50 to make the trip. Night overtook us in the midst of the woods and we found lodging for a few hours in a little log cabin. By one o'clock in the morning the journey was resumed. Though the stars shone brightly it was very dark in the woods. The road was new, many stumps still stood even in the wagon tracks, and mud holes were a plenty. The priest dropped asleep, but when ever the wagon hit a stump he would jump up greatly frightened. This won't do, he said, we must start something to keep awake. So we decided that each one was to sing a song. We did so. But while the Irishman was singing he forgot about his driving, and suddenly upset us into a bottomless mudhole. I was sticking in the mud where it was deepest and the wagonbox lay on top of me. I heard the priest groaning, for he had been injured. But when the driver pulled the box off of me and I crawled out of the mud looking like a mudturtle, he had to laugh in spite of his pain. Fortunately the wagon had not been broken, so we turned it right side up and drove on. From that time on the priest had no difficulty in keeping awake without singing. By twelve o'clock we were in Defiance. From there we travelled on the canal to Ft. Wayne. At Ft. Wayne the priest left us and we hunted up a German tavern.

"A few years before this visit, a relative of my wife had lodged in Ft. Wayne over night, and had been robbed of \$500.00, which he had placed under his pillow. As he suspected the proprietor of being the robber he described both the man and the place to us upon his return. The place where this man had been robbed was a small log cabin; hence we carefully avoided such a lodging place, and selected a nice, new frame tavern instead. But as soon as I saw the proprietor, I began

to suspect that he was the individual who had stolen the \$500.00. After supper I sat down on the bench in front of the house. A stranger sat down beside me and we fell into a conversation. I asked him whether the tavern was considered safe. Oh yes, said he, I think it's all right, the proprietor seems to be making money. Not very long ago, he lived in a small log cabin, and now he has erected this fine frame building. When I heard that, I was certain that I had got into the very place, I had wished to avoid. So I called my companion and said to him: I won't stay here, and told him why. But he laughed and said, We have two pistols with us, and can take care of ourselves. At bedtime we asked for our satchels, and obtained them only with considerable difficulty. The room assigned us had neither lock nor bolt, so I placed a table before the door and a chair on the table leaning against the door in such a way that if the door were moved the chair must fall and awake us. Placing the pistols close at hand we tried to sleep. I could not sleep, however, and about twelve o'clock I heard someone creeping cautiously up the stairs. I awoke my companion. In a moment the door was pushed slightly. I called but received no answer. In a little while the door was pushed again. Then I jumped up, seized a pistol and called, Whoever is there, stay out, or I will shoot. The clicking of the hammer as the pistol was cocked frightened the fellow and we heard him hurrying down the stairs. If the poor scamp had known what a poor shot I was, he would have had no fear. I do not believe I would have shot, and even if I had, I would never have hit him. I always did have the habit when shooting off a pistol or gun of carefully closing my eyes.

"The next day we rode down the canal to Huntington. At that time Huntington was a little village of about eighteen houses, if I remember rightly. In the neighborhood were a number of families formerly belonging to my parish in Ohio. These I looked up. In the second home that I entered, the father and children greeted me with tears, saying that the mother had been buried four weeks before, but they had been unable to find a minister to conduct a service. So I acceded

to their wish and conducted a funeral service in a school house before a reverent congregation. In the village of Huntington I also preached in a schoolhouse and conducted a funeral service. One of the farmers loaned us two horses and so my companion and I also rode to Miami County, where I preached in private houses four times, administered the Lord's Supper, and baptized a number of children. I was told that no Reformed minister had ever visited that community before. On the return trip from there, a forest several miles in extent had to be traversed. Suddenly we came upon a clearing in which there was a little log cabin. A woman was standing at the washtub before the door. She looked at us very closely and suddenly cried out: Isn't your name Herbruck? After receiving my answer, she hurried to us, and began to weep, saying, "Oh, how glad I am to see you again. How often I have thought of you, and desired to hear you preach." I discovered that I had confirmed her in the Zion's congregation.

"Having returned the borrowed horses in Huntington, we started for our dear homes again."

## CHAPTER XI

### THREE PERPLEXING QUESTIONS

**D**URING the first ten years of Rev. Herbruck's pastorate, three perplexing questions gradually forced themselves upon the attention of the congregations as well as the pastor of the Canton charge. These questions had to do respectively with the change of language from German to English, with the temperance agitation which was sweeping over the state, and with the new measure fanaticism that threatened to subvert Reformed denominational consciousness and customs.

The first question that demanded consideration was the language in which the services should be conducted. In 1826, the minutes of the Ohio Synod were printed in English for the first time. That year Rev. Faust requested only ten English copies for all his congregations, but within four years the number of English copies needed had increased to one-fourth of the entire number requested by the charge. The cause of this rapid change to the English is very plain. The majority of the early settlers were Pennsylvania Germans. Their children grew up with only scant school opportunities at best; and such educational facilities as were available were all English. Consequently there was an ever lessening number who could read and use the German. It was almost imperative therefore that the pastor of the Canton charge should be able to officiate in both languages. This seems to have been the chief reason why the congregations hesitated at the beginning to call Mr. Herbruck as regular pastor. After he had taken complete charge of the congregations there thus remained little groups of members throughout the charge who wanted some English preaching. In Canton this group, not seeing any way of attaining their desire united in 1837 with a like group from the Lutheran congregation and organized an English congregation which later became the Trinity Lutheran church. Similar losses of members occurred in the other congregations of the Canton



charge. In 1837 Dr. Buettner declared that Osnaburg was the most German village which he had found in Ohio; nevertheless when he became pastor some months later he found it necessary to conduct his catechetical instructions in English as well as German. The language question for thirty-five years remained a constant source of irritation in the congregations; for although Rev. Herbruck later became quite proficient in the use of the English language, he would never consent to use it for a public address or sermon.

The second question with which the congregations and pastor had to grapple had to do with the use of intoxicating liquors. The use of intoxicants was all but universal. The social customs and ideals of the people "almost enforced the habit of drinking in ordinary intercourse." Drunkenness and its attendant evils had increased to a point "of which it is difficult for us at this date to form a clear conception." About 1830 a great wave of temperance agitation swept over the country. The movement did not aim especially at the prohibition of the manufacture or sale of intoxicants, but rather sought to combat drunkenness by breaking down the prevalent vicious social usages, and upholding and inculcating total abstinence as the ideal and duty of the Christian. At the beginning the movement was entirely religious without attempting to invoke the law or secure prohibitory legislation.

The early pastors of the Reformed Church in Ohio frequently speak of the prevalence of drunkenness and Sabbath-breaking, and hence, quickly gave their support to this temperance movement, which showed promise of effecting a decided reformation. The sentiment in the Synod was, however, not unanimous and tremendous discussions were aroused. These discussions were especially acrid in the second district of the Ohio Synod to which the Canton charge belonged.

After the union of the West Pennsylvania Classis and the Ohio Synod had been consummated considerable differences of opinion developed. It was hoped to facilitate the process of amalgamation by dividing the territory into three districts which would meet as district Synods annually, and as a Gene-

ral Synod every three years. The former West Pennsylvania Classis became the first district; the congregations in Virginia and Ohio east of Marietta, Zanesville, Columbus and Toledo were in the second district; all other congregations farther west constituted the third district. This division was made in 1839.

In 1841 the second district after a heated discussion passed the following resolution: "We consider the use of intoxicating liquors as being most injurious to the morals and health of the people; therefore we advise the members of the congregations and the pastors of our district to join the Temperance Associations; and we as ministers herewith declare that we will abstain from the use of such liquors."

Against this resolution eight of the ministers presented a minority report which is recorded in the minutes together with their names. In this report the protesting brethren solemnly aver their opposition to the resolution passed, "Because on no page of Holy Scripture can we find that the use of excellent, spirituous liquors is forbidden or accounted as injurious; and we are unwilling to burden the consciences of our congregations with human enactments. But we do agree with that which the apostle says in the Epistle to the Philippians in the third chapter in the second half of the fifteenth verse.\*"

This advanced position on the temperance question, taken by the Second District of the Ohio Synod, did not stand by itself in the Reformed Church; but was probably inspired by the resolutions of the older Synod in the East taken the year before which stated that "The Synod considers the influence of intemperance as a deplorable hindrance to the spread of the Gospel and equally detrimental to the temporal and eternal interests of mankind: therefore, be it resolved, First, that we

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\* The ministers who signed this minority report were A. Begeman, Peter Herbruck, D. Rahauser, J. Schlosser, N. Franz, J. Schmidt, A. Neu, D. Marburger. The quotation referred to is as follows: "And if in anything ye are otherwise minded, this also shall God reveal unto you." The quotation seems as inappropriate as the contents of the resolution to which it was appended.

will not only abstain from the use of spirituous liquors for ourselves, but also, as much as in us lies, will support the cause of temperance in our congregations, by our influence; Secondly, in view of all the information presented concerning the evil effects of intemperance, the Synod considers the manufacture, the sale, and the use of spirituous liquors as an evil, which should be banished from the church."

That these temperance resolutions of the higher church courts would arouse violent opposition was to be expected; that the pastors of German congregations would have no sympathy with them was but natural. Throughout the Second District up to the beginning of the temperance agitation those who sold intoxicants were considered quite as respectable church members as any others, the taverns were the common meeting-places for the Germans, while the tavern-keeper was generally one of the most liberal supporters of the church. The German pastors found themselves in a serious predicament. If they supported the temperance movement many members would turn away from the church and withhold their financial support; if they tried to remain neutral, the friends of the movement were alienated and their bitter criticism was aroused. Even if the members of the German congregations left to themselves might have been able to work out the problem in their own way, they were not permitted to do so; but became the objects of violent attacks by their American neighbor-churches. The German pastors were publicly assailed as "dead bones," "stumbling blocks," "dutch preachers," and such like pet epithets. Hence it can be easily seen that many congregations and some pastors looked askance at the prominence which the Synod resolutions gave the question.

The division of the Ohio Synod into three district-synods which met annually did not prove satisfactory. Instead of unifying the Synod it threatened to disrupt it. As the meeting of the first General Synod of the three districts approached in 1842, it became clear that some other plan must be adopted. The meeting was held in our Canton church, and marked an epoch in the Reformed church history of Ohio. The district

plan was abandoned, and in its stead the territory of the Synod was divided into five classes,\* which were to meet annually in the spring; while the Synod was to meet annually also, but in the fall. The Canton charge became a part of the Columbiana Classis. Furthermore a plan was adopted for closer union with the mother Synod in the East. The Ohio Synod adopted the constitution of the mother Synod, and agreed to an interchange of the reports on the state of religion and statistics, each Synod agreeing to print both reports in their own minutes; besides this, each Synod was to send two fraternal delegates to attend the meeting of the other, such delegates having the right to join in the deliberations and to vote.

The ministers who had opposed the temperance resolution in the Second District the year before, brought in a complaint at this meeting; but the Synod permitted the resolutions to stand. As the agitations continued, the Synod finally in 1844 passed the most drastic resolutions of its history in the words: "Resolved, that this Synod considers the custom of drinking brandy or using spirituous liquors as most injurious, and destructive of all principles of true piety. Resolved, furthermore, that this Synod decidedly disapproves of the use of spirituous liquors by the ministers, and takes the position that all who are guilty in this particular justly deserve the severest censure of this body to which they belong."

Though the Synod had spoken thus clearly, the opposing minority would not acquiesce. This is indeed greatly to be regretted. Had the support been unanimous among the ministers, the temperance sentiment and position of the Reformed Church in Ohio would have been already seventy years ago, as advanced as it is today. Though Rev. Herbruck was entirely conscientious in his attitude of opposition to the temperance convictions of the Synod, that fact did not shield him against the untoward consequences that followed. Throughout the charge in the various congregations were little groups who

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\* The names given the classes were Miami, Lancaster, Columbiana, Sandusky, Westmoreland, and Erie. The first four were in Ohio, the last two were in Pennsylvania.

were utterly opposed to the liquor traffic. Some of these members bitterly criticized the attitude of the pastor; others simply left the Reformed Church. This departure caused a two-fold loss: it removed the leaven of "dry sentiment" which was sorely needed in that age of general intemperance; and furthermore, other and most undesirable elements were attracted, and for a half century the congregations of the Canton charge became the welcome haven of liquor dealers, saloon-keepers, and bartenders. Even as late as 1880, the sentiment of the Canton congregation was such that a saloon-keeper was permitted to act as a Sunday-school teacher and leader of the choir.

The third and most momentous question of all had to do with the so-called "new-measures" movement. These "new-measures" borrowed largely from Methodist and Presbyterian sources, consisted of series of revival meetings, meetings for prayer and relating of religious experiences, and especially the use of the mourner's bench. The mourner's bench was simply the front pew which the preacher urged those to occupy who professed "conversion," desired "to get religion," or wished to "consecrate" their lives anew to God. As long as these new methods were introduced judiciously and used with proper decorum they met with comparatively little opposition, and real good was accomplished in awakening apathetic church-members satisfied with the mere outward forms of religion. As the movement spread, however, the enthusiasts for the new measures among the ministers were quite swept from their Reformed moorings and fell into astonishing excesses. Probably nowhere in Ohio did these excesses surpass the heights reached in Stark and surrounding counties between 1840 and 1846. Furthermore it is difficult to conceive how events more strenuous and exciting could have transpired anywhere than within the bounds of the Canton charge.

Most of the neighboring Reformed preachers had gone in for the "new measures" with great enthusiasm, but Rev. Herbruck was determined to adhere faithfully to "the old foundations and customs" of the Reformed Church as he had



always held them. The "new measure" men made an effort to win him over to their side. The effort and its result make interesting reading in Rev. Herbruck's own words:

"At that time, I was the only Reformed minister in Stark County, so far as my recollection goes, who still held to the old foundations and customs of our beloved Reformed Church. At the beginning the attempt was made to persuade me with nice words to adopt the 'new-measure' ideas. One minister came to my house and used all his powers of persuasion in the effort to swing me into the movement. Among other arguments he said: You are not being supported by your congregation as you ought to be. This also used to be my condition; but since I have gone in for the 'new-measure' ways, the same people who used to pay one or two dollars, now pay five or ten. You see 'new measurism' brings bread into the home. I promptly told him that I wanted no bread that had to be earned by violating my inner convictions; rather than do that, I would hang my black coat on a handy peg, and go out into the woods and split fence rails."\*

A more strenuous method of persuasion was now adopted. Eight or nine of the new-measure men invaded Canton, secured the use of the Presbyterian church and conducted revival meetings, continuing for several weeks. Sermons were preached on themes intended to arouse the careless church members and the unconverted; such as, the lost nature of man, hell and its terrors, man's helplessness, the necessity of conversion, justification by faith only, heaven and its joys, etc. The purpose of the meetings was not only to lift up the religious conditions of Canton but also to alienate the Reformed people from their pastor, create a division, or even drive him from his congregation. The speakers did not even refrain from indirect public attack upon Rev. Herbruck as he testifies:

"Every imaginable arrow was aimed at me. In a treacherous manner, the most disgraceful falsehoods were circulated

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.

about me; always avoiding however, the mentioning of my name.”\*

Possibly the cause of this wrathful conduct was to be found in the fact that when the “new-measure” men began their meetings, Rev. Herbruck began a series of meetings also:

“I began to hold services each evening in my church in order to keep my church members away from those meetings. I knew of no Reformed minister who could be secured to assist; hence, the two Lutheran ministers came to my aid, Rev. Fast, and Rev. Lehman. Rev. Lehman from Columbus preached each evening for an entire week.”\*

At the meetings conducted by the new-measure men great stress was laid upon the mourner’s bench. The penitents were urged to come forward so that prayer might be offered in their behalf. When they finally declared themselves as “converted,” the congregation would join with them in crying: “Glory! glory! blessed be Jesus! Hallelujah!†” Only those who had gone through such a volcanic experience were declared as being true Christians. “The anxious-bench was made the machine for conversion, and, as it were, the gateway to heaven.”\*

With the exaltation of the mourner’s bench (or anxious bench) there followed the depreciation and elimination of the Heidelberg Catechism and all catechetical instruction.

“The Catechism was laid aside, as not being needed any more. One of the ministers who had adopted these new measures boldly asserted: We are not obliged to use the catechism any more. If a father has a young horse, and rides him until he becomes old and stiff; that’s no reason why the son should go on riding the stiff, old beast.”\*

These revival meetings generally paved the way for the introduction of prayer meetings. At the beginning of the new-measure movement these prayer meetings were conducted quietly and with decorum, very similar to the meetings common in our day. However, as the movement spread and developed,

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.

† Dr. Buettner.

disorder and noise became common. Several persons might be praying or testifying at the same time, accompanied "occasionally with many sighs, groans, moans, and exclamations."† The disorder assumed such alarming proportions, that the church judicatories were obliged to pass a number of regulatory resolutions. The Second District, within whose bounds the waves of fanaticism were running highest, resolved in 1841, "While one is praying the others are to be silent, and pray along in mind and spirit. All noise and all boisterous ranting (Toben) by which the natural emotions are excited (erhitzt) is to be avoided." The Ohio Synod in its general meeting in Canton in 1842, resolved, "That this Synod disapproves of disorderly conducted protracted meetings, or several-day meetings, the introduction of the mourner's bench, the loud praying of women in mixed assemblages for prayer, as also, the loud praying of several persons at the same time. This, however, does not refer to orderly protracted meetings and prayer meetings."

As the new-measure movement reached its zenith, it became necessary to take still more drastic action, which was done in 1849 in the following words, "This Synod discountenances and hopes that all ministers and members of the church will discountenance all disorder, noise, and confusion in public worship; such as, more than one praying at the same time, shouting during public preaching, etc., all rant and wild-fire; as not in our opinion in accordance with the standards of our Church, the spirit of religion, or the teaching of the Bible. The Synod exhorts the brethren to be careful in all things to conduct their religious meetings in decency and in such order as accords with God's house, and not to violate the constitution and standards of our church in letter or in spirit." New-measurism must indeed have been prospering riotously to call for such treatment.

The necessity of resolutions like these given, becomes the clearer when we further consider certain occurrences that took place within the Canton charge. About 1840, Rev. Abraham

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† Dr. Buettner.

Keller came to Osnaburg and served the Carrollton and Hersh (or Hursh) congregations in Carrollton County, and the St. Martin's and Uniontown congregations in Stark County. At the beginning of his ministry he had been opposed to the "new-measures," but later developed into an ardent advocate of the same. After coming to Stark County he soon joined hands with the group of eight or nine new-measure men who had already conducted the Canton revival, for the purpose of holding similar meetings in the other congregations of the charge. Dividing themselves into two teams the various congregations were invaded. In Osnaburg the Reformed ministers were joined by ministers of other denominations. A wave of revival enthusiasm swept through the community. Many went to the mourner's bench and professed conversion; among these were also a goodly number of Reformed people. Prayermeetings were held in the homes of the "converts." In the Sunday School some of the "converted" began to kneel with the children and engage in long prayers for their salvation. The catechism and catechetical instruction were ridiculed. Disorder and noisy demonstrations crept in. This aroused the larger and more conservative portion of the congregation who were loyal to Rev. Herbruck and his ways, and they rose up and attempted to put a stop to the raging of the "wild-fire," as they called it. Then the converts from various denominations—Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans and Reformed—decided to build a union-church. In less than two weeks a log-church was ready (1842) and Rev. Keller took charge of the new congregation. This aroused violent quarrels and bitter animosities. The new congregation loudly boasted: "Now we have the pure Gospel. Before this we were in a state of blindness and irreligion with our pastor, but now we are enlightened, converted, regenerated, sanctified and saved. Our former pastor was never converted and is unfit to preach the Gospel. His preaching was hay, straw, and stubbles. We are praying constantly that he may be converted and receive the Holy Ghost; because otherwise he is a very good and agreeable man."

But, alas, after a few months, dissensions and quarrels broke out among the "converted, enlightened, etc.," and finally after many bitter disappointments, Rev. Keller had to give up the Osnaburg field. Several of his children had died, his "converts" had largely returned to the church they had left, and frequently the poor man was put to hard straits for his daily bread; but Rev. Herbruck continued to preach in Osnaburg for about thirty years more.

About the same time that the first team of "new-measures" invaded the Osnaburg field, the second team started in to hold revival meetings in one of the country congregations. The description of what happened there will be given in Rev. Herbruck's own words:

"Protracted meetings were begun in one of my country congregations in a barn which they rented. The leader of the new-measure men, Rev. S—— again slandered me in every possible way, but always refrained from mentioning my name. These impudent slanders finally aroused me to an action, which later I greatly regretted. In my entire life I never had a taste for scrapping. I do not remember ever having had a fight with anyone even as a boy. But when these bold insinuations continued, I suddenly lost my good nature. I armed myself with a heavy stick, put five dollars into my pocket, and marched to the barn accompanied by a powerful man. My purpose was to give the fellow a thorough thrashing, and then proceed to a justice of the peace and pay my fine. But the dear God, thanks be unto Him, so directed the matter that I could not carry out my project. When I came to the barn Rev. S—— was not there. I told some of the people who were there what my intentions had been. From that time on the insinuations ceased. So the scheme seems to have been worth something anyhow!"\*

These unlawful invasions of the charge of a fellow-minister aroused Rev. Herbruck to send a protest to the Ohio Synod, "begging the Synod urgently to put a stop to these mis-

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.



chievous disturbances. My complaint was laid on the table, and was not even considered worthy of an answer.”\*

As the Synod thus had shown itself unwilling to protect its German ministers who preferred to walk in the conservative, old-Reformed paths, these ministers determined to defend themselves. This defense reached its climax in the formation of an independent Synod in 1846. This Synod became popularly known as the “Herbruck Synod,” and its history will be given in the next chapter.

In this place it seems proper to give an estimate of the benefits and the injuries wrought by the new-measure movement.

That it worked out grave injuries in the church cannot be denied. A shallow and superficial type of church-life and Christian-life was fostered by the methods used to gain members and converts. Quarrels, divisions, censoriousness, intemperate speech, spiritual conceit and pride were the general accompaniments of a revival effort. The departure from the spirit and the usages of the Reformed Church was so violent that the Church was threatened with absorption into the stronger denominations whose methods were being so enthusiastically adopted. The repudiation of the catechism and all religious instruction of the youth meant the loss of the finest aid to piety that the church possessed. Some parts of the Ohio Synod have never recovered from the non-Reformed elements which were then introduced into its life. To this day the catechism and religious instruction are tabooed by certain of its ministers; others have limited the period of instruction to a few weeks with scarcely an effort to enrich the mind with any of the wonderful answers of our Catechism; and only a few of its ministers give religious instruction the prominence it occupies in the German Synods.

But on the other hand it must also be acknowledged that the movement served to arouse the church spiritually as it had never been aroused before. Many prayer-meetings and devo-

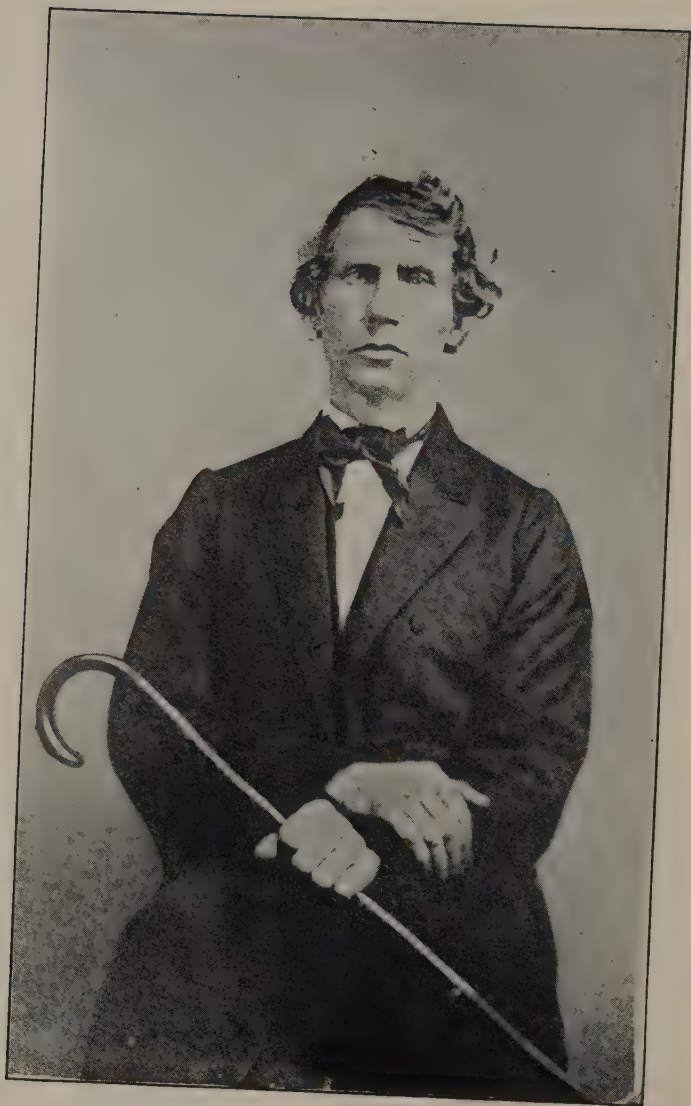
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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.

tional meetings during the week were started where none had ever existed; Sunday-schools were transformed into opportunities for teaching religious truths instead of the German language; family-worship was begun in numberless homes where before it had been looked upon as "a species of saintly affectation." The curse of intemperance and impurity was diminished, and even successfully suppressed in many localities. Especially was the entire church aroused to the danger of mere formalism and lifeless orthodoxy that was content with being confirmed and partaking of the Lord's Supper occasionally, and leading a "reasonably decent" life, without having any notion of a real heart experience. The emphasis which the new-measure movement placed upon a personal, religious experience and heart assurance had a quickening, spiritual effect upon the foes as well as friends of the movement. Interest in missions was also aroused, more young men for the ministry offered themselves, the spirit of benevolence increased, and thousands of new members were won. In the year 1843 alone, the total increase in Ohio as a result of this movement was 1536 souls.

Though we may still deplore the extravagance and fanaticism into which some of the leaders of the movement fell; and though we may regret the turmoil and violent scenes enacted within the bounds of the Canton charge; those who dispassionately judge the matter will probably be willing to concede that it required something "powerfully strong" to arouse the people from their religious self-contentment.





REV. PETER HERBRUCK  
*At age forty-five*

## CHAPTER XII

### THE HERBRUCK SYNOD

FROM 1846-1852 about a score of German ministers maintained an independent Synod. This Synod called itself officially "The German Synod of the High German Reformed Church of Ohio and Adjacent States." The popular name by which it was known among the people, however, was "The Herbruck Synod"; so called after Rev. Peter Herbruck who was the main leader and spirit in effecting and maintaining the organization. Since the secession from the Ohio Synod took place in the Osnaburg church, and all congregations of the Canton charge joined the new Synod with their pastor, the "Herbruck Synod" thus becomes of peculiar interest to us.

The causes which led to the organization of this independent Synod have already been discussed in the last chapter. The friction created by the transition from the German to the English became more and more acute as time passed. Finally in 1844 the Ohio Synod decided that English congregations might be organized within the bounds of German congregations even when these were opposed. This decision of Synod threw the German ministers into a very belligerent frame of mind. The opposition of the German ministers in eastern Ohio was increased by the fact that the English pastors were nearly all new-measure men; and this sanction of the Synod to organize English congregations meant in numerous cases not only the division of congregations and the erection of rival churches, but also the arousing of great bitterness between former fellow-ministers and fellow-members. Just how much influence the temperance agitation had in bringing about the secession it is difficult to say, but doubtlessly it must be rated as a strong contributory cause.

Rev. Herbruck who had become the generally recognized leader of the old-Reformed, anti-new-measure men had ad-



dressed a protest to the Synod in 1844, asking for suitable legislation against the arrogant fanaticism of the new-measure agitators from which he had suffered. The Synod not only ignored the request, but also gave permission for the organization of rival English congregations in German fields. This was too much. The German ministers began to discuss means of redress privately, but it was not until the meeting of Columbiana Classis at Osnaburg in 1846 (June 3) that the complete break came.

The animosities broke out as soon as the opening sermon had been delivered, as described by Rev. Herbruck:

"Father Sonnendecker was president of the Classis. According to the constitution he was to preach the opening sermon. He excused himself by explaining that he was sick, and not prepared to preach a set sermon, and contented himself with delivering a brief but very appropriate address to the Classis. Hardly had the aged father sat down, when one of the new-measure men jumped up, and said, 'That was no opening sermon, etc., etc.' The aged father was insulted in such a way that the tears stood in his eyes. The next step was, that all of them began speaking English, though every one could speak German. This was done to prevent those of us who could not speak English from taking part in the debate. I begged the gentlemen to use the German, saying that the congregation was German, and the members of the Classis were all German. The answer given me was: 'We will speak as we wish, for this does not concern anyone else.'"\*

Rev. J. W. Hamm was elected president. One of the German men immediately made the motion, "That we declare ourselves independent of the General Synod of Ohio."† The motion was "strongly opposed by the valiant brethren of the cross, and our Reformed Zion."†

When the time for the noon recess arrived the motion was still under discussion. During the noon hour the German

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.

† Minutes of Columbiana Classis. The secretary was an ardent new-measure man.

brethren got together under the leadership of Rev. Herbruck, because, "I and some of the other brethren saw that things could not continue in this fashion any longer. We met in a private house and discussed the matter. The decision was to separate, and organize a new Synod which would stand firmly upon the old foundations and customs of the Reformed Church. A canvas of the members of Classis disclosed the fact that our party had a majority of one. At the opening of the afternoon session one of our number made the motion that we separate from the old Ohio Synod, and form a new synod under the name of "The German Synod of the High German Reformed Church of Ohio and Adjacent States."\*

The resolution as formulated by them read, "Whereas, the so-called new-measure men have made powerful attacks upon our congregations, and have destroyed the peace and quiet in many places; Therefore, resolved, that we declare ourselves independent of the General Synod until said Synod adopt measures to arrest such innovations."†

A vigorous discussion followed. When the motion was put, it carried by a majority of one, and "the following brethren seceded: Revs. P. Herbruck, H. Sonnendecker, J. W. Hamm, F. Ruhl, C. Zwisler and George Weber."†

As soon as the result had been announced, "Things began to happen. The leader of the new-measure men, Rev. S——, was present though he was not a member of the Columbiana Classis. He arose and said to the new-measure men: You are now the Columbiana Classis; those who have thus torn themselves away have no business here any more. You must now organize and go on with your business. The brother who had been elected as president at the morning session was in sympathy with us but was unwilling to be at odds with the other faction. So he left the president's chair and withdrew. The father of the leader of the new-measurites was on our side, he at once arose, sat down in the president's place and declared,

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.

† Minutes of Columbiana Classis.

Now I am president, and not one of you can take this place from me. The leader of the new-measurites nevertheless insisted that officers should be elected and business should proceed. A tumult arose. During the excitement an elder of the church went to the leader of the new-measurites, grabbed him by the collar and shoved him out of the church. Like a swarm of bees his adherents followed him, and the men of the old school were alone. Then we adjourned to meet on October 3, of the same year in New Lisbon, Columbiana County, when the new Synod was to be organized.\*"

The new-measure men went at once to the union-church which had been built four years before under Rev. A. Keller and reorganized by electing Rev. Keller as president. The remnant of Columbiana Classis contained only four ministers (A. Keller, A. Stump, F. Stump, N. Pfaltzgraf). Aroused by the exciting scenes through which they had just passed, they got together and solemnly composed and adopted a report in which the following remarkable words occur. "It might be thought by some that the secession of some brethren is an unhappy event for the Classis, but we cannot but hail it as a gracious epoch in our history by which we have at once been rid of men who oppose the spirit of piety and every sacred institution of our holy religion. We cannot regard it as a blessing to any Church to have in their midst men who oppose prayermeetings, protracted meetings, revivals of religion, etc., and we bless God that we are rid of such material. Imploring God's blessing upon us in the future, we can trust in him for blessed results."†

When the exciting day at last drew to its close and the ministers found their way to their places of entertainment a new surprise awaited some of them. The news of the day's happenings had been carried throughout the congregation. "A great excitement arose among the members of the church. The members in favor of the new-measures, who had

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.

† Minutes of Columbiana Classis.

a minister of the old school as guest at once told him to get out. The members in favor of the old school ways did the same to their new-measure guests.”\*

According to the resolution adopted at Osnaburg, the seceding ministers met in New Lisbon on October 3. Although only six ministers had voted at Osnaburg to leave the Ohio Synod, there were ten present at the organization and eight more requested to be received as members of the new Synod. Most of them were from Ohio and Pennsylvania. To us the most important action of the meeting was the statement of the reasons for the secession. This document was written by Rev. Herbruck, who was chairman of the committee which had this matter in charge. This statement was addressed to the pastors and members of the entire Reformed Church, and expresses the keen regret of the new organization that separation should have been made imperative by the excesses of the new-measure men, and “the evil treatment which we have received from them.” The following reasons for the secession are then set forth: “Departure from the ancient usages, doctrines, and symbols of the Reformed Church, and the introduction of the mourner’s bench and its accompaniments. The invasion of our congregations by the new-measure men, whereby peace has been destroyed, and faction and hate engendered. The ways and means employed by the new-measure men to establish a spiritual hierarchy in the church.”†

The new Synod also declared its firm adherence to the Bible, the Heidelberg Catechism, all the doctrines, usages and symbols of the Reformed Church, and adopted the old constitution of the Ohio Synod. It furthermore declared that, “We are prepared at any moment to unite with the Ohio Synod again so soon as the causes of our complaints have been removed, the evils done away with, and the transgressors punished.”

During the brief history of the “Herbruck Synod,” twenty-five ministers were on its roll, but the greatest number at

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.

† Minutes of the “Herbruck Synod” for 1846.

any one time was only eighteen. Already at the first session the cause of foreign missions was unanimously recommended to the congregations, and in home missionary work considerable activity was shown. "After several years the Synod also decided to publish a church-paper entitled, *The Evangelist*. A goodly number of subscriptions had already been gathered,"\* and one number of the paper was published; but the first number also was the last. The paper was discontinued because the Synod had reached the decision to unite again with the Ohio Synod.

The sentiment in the Columbiana Classis and the Ohio Synod had been changing very rapidly. The fanaticism of the new-measurites had produced a reaction. In the old Columbiana Classis grave conditions had developed. Several new ministers had been ordained after very insufficient preparation. A number of these drifted into theological vagaries. Views absolutely at variance with the teachings of the Reformed church were proclaimed. The sessions of the Classis seethed with theological debates. These experiences had a very sobering effect upon the others. The Classis began to legislate against, "all disorder and confusion" at a public service; as well as, "everything that destroys the solemnity of worship and the spirit of devotion." The Catechism and catechetical instruction were emphasized again, and were introduced once more by some of those who had discarded it; and "the disorders and errors of fanaticism" were condemned.

At one time three of the ministers were suspended for heresy and refusal to obey the authority of the Church; one left the Reformed Church, several died, and finally only three ministers were left in the Classis.

The Ohio Synod also had changed from its position of 1844. The permission to organize English congregations within the bounds of existing German congregations was revoked; the complacent ignoring of the complaints of the German ministers against new-measure excesses gave place to stern reso-

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.



lutions aiming to restore order and comity. Because the Ohio Synod thus acknowledged its errors and reversed its previous actions, and also frequently urged the "Herbruck Synod" men to come back, a number of the ministers returned to the old Synod. Furthermore "a number of well educated young men from the East"\* had been received, and "as the temperament of the Synod was changing, and the hindrances seemed removed"\* the eighteen left were ready to return to the old Synod.

The following plan of reunion was agreed upon in 1851. The Ohio Synod was to create a Northern German Classis and a Southern German Classis, the line running through Columbus east and west. All the ministers preaching in German were to have the privilege of uniting with the one or the other of these Classes. The "Herbruck Synod" under this plan was to become the nucleus of the new Northern German Classis. In accordance with this agreement the Northern German Classis met in Akron, Ohio, June 23, 1852 and organized.

It would seem that now there ought to have been peace, but not so. The old friction with Columbiana Classis which now again numbered five ministers continued. Two of their ministers invaded the fields of their neighbors in the Northern German Classis. The old quarrels threatened to break out again. At a special meeting of the Northern German Classis, held in 1853, in Canton, at which Rev. Herbruck was again the dominant figure, the Classis decided to send an ultimatum to Synod demanding that Columbiana Classis should be dissolved, or some other plan of removing the grievances should be immediately found, or else the Northern German Classis would again declare itself "free and independent," although "nothing but an unavoidable necessity would drive us to such a step." Rev. Herbruck helped to draft this ultimatum. One of the main reasons for this drastic action seems to have been the determination to permit only the use of the German language in the Classis and the congregations belonging to it. The dif-

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.

ficulty was finally adjusted by the Ohio Synod in 1854 by authorizing both the Northern German Classis and the Columbiana Classis to dissolve, and then, after arranging the fragments into two parts to suit themselves, to organize two new Classes. This plan proved satisfactory to both Classes; hence they dissolved, and the German ministers organized the St. John's Classis\* at Massillon, on June 21, 1854. Since that time the Canton congregation has remained a part of this Classis. The first regular meeting of the Classis was held in the Canton church in October following the organization.

It seemed both necessary and appropriate that the story of these difficulties with the Ohio Synod should be presented somewhat at length because Rev. Herbruck was the main figure in the movement for an independent Synod, and was heartily supported in every step that was taken by his congregations. That he had abundant justification in that period of religious fanaticism and synodical hesitancy to deal vigorously with the situation, has been made plain by the facts presented. It is clear that the secession of so large a number of ministers made a deep impression upon Synod, and immediately brought about a reaction in favor of the more conservative ways and customs of the fathers. While we may at the present time deplore that the secession occurred, the German ministers were confronted by what they considered a dread disease, and the surgeon's knife promised the speediest cure.

During this period the following congregations belonged to the Canton charge: Canton, Osna burg, Paris, St. Martin's, St. Peter's and Zions, whose locations have already been given. St. John's in Massillon, which had been reorganized by Dr. Buettner, was also supplied by Rev. Herbruck during the intervals when they had no regular pastor.

The number of communicants in all the congregations var-

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\* Other names that were also considered were Canton Classis, or Heidelberg, North Ohio and Salems. After the strenuous scenes through which the ministers of the new Classis had passed the name St. John's seemed most appropriate. The name has proved itself a prophecy.

ied between 450 and 742. The baptisms averaged 120 each year and the confirmations 78.

It was a requirement of the Independent Synod that each congregation should send an annual report giving the opinion of the membership as to the work of the pastor and the condition of the congregation. Sometimes each consistory sent a separate report; more generally a joint report was signed by the several consistories. A number of these reports have been preserved. Two of these will be given as fair samples of all of them. The spelling, punctuation and capitalization of the originals are retained:

"We the undersigned Members of the ——— Church, do hereby sartify that we are dewly Satisfied with Mr Rev P Herbruck as a teacher of the Gospel in our midst and wish him to remain teacher in our Church."

The second testimonial will be left in the German as written:

"Wihr die unter schrieben bezeigen hier mit das die gliter vohn der ——— gemeinte felig zufrieden sein mit Peter herbruck Pretiger."

CHAPTER XIII  
SEPARATION FROM THE LUTHERANS  
AND  
BUILDING THE FIRST REFORMED CHURCH

**D**URING the years from 1830-1850, Canton was almost completely at a standstill. The building of the Ohio Canal through Massillon in 1830 was a staggering blow to the town. Massillon grew rapidly, and became the center of trade and shipping for two score miles around. Grain, furs, and various products in large quantities were shipped out. The number of settlers in the county increased.

"Fast fell the forests,  
Cabins by night-time grew;  
Like bees to honey,  
Each settler others drew."

But though farming boomed and prospered, Massillon alone received the benefit, and Canton lagged and languished. In twenty years, an addition of scant five hundred inhabitants could be recorded. Then in 1851, the Pittsburgh, Ft. Wayne and Chicago Railroad was built from Pittsburgh as far as Canton. Immediately the town felt the impetus of new life. Industries were established, the population increased, and Canton rapidly forged ahead.

The growth of the town was a great benefit to the Reformed church. As a large number of the new inhabitants were Germans and Swiss, the congregation increased considerably in membership. The union church-building which had served the Reformed and Lutheran congregations for thirty years became too small for the audiences, and furthermore was in need of extensive repairs.

The relations between the congregations had also gradually become rather strained. During the first forty years of their



THE THIRD CHURCH BUILDING  
*Dedicated 1862*





history the two congregations had worked together with scarcely a consciousness of any denominational distinctions. The children of both congregations were instructed alternatively by the pastors of either denomination; and the members of each congregation had the right to vote for the officers of the other congregation. Until 1829 the two congregations also kept their church records in the same book.

During these years numerous efforts were made to effect an organic union between the two denominations. The efforts proved futile and came to a definite end about 1840, because the two bodies began to clearly apprehend their denominational distinctions. The gulf was widened still more by the new-measure movement in the Reformed Church. Theological attacks of great bitterness were made, and accusations of heretical teachings were hurled by Lutheran divines against the Reformed ministers. Gross misrepresentations of the doctrines of the Reformed Church were also widely circulated. These occurrences in the denominations at large still further estranged the local congregations in Canton.

In 1855 the Lutheran congregation made the first move to secure a separation by appointing a committee to confer with the consistory of the Reformed Church to ascertain "whether one of the congregations might not be willing to purchase the rights of the other in the property; and under what conditions this might be accomplished."

As a result of this conference it was agreed to submit to each congregation the following propositions to be voted on:

1. Whether the church-building should be repaired or improved jointly.
2. Whether one congregation should purchase all the rights of the other.
3. Whether the church should be pulled down and the materials be divided equitably between the two congregations.

The two congregational meetings disclosed such a variety of opinions that no common ground could be found. Some wanted to simply repair the old building, others wanted to repair and enlarge the building, still others wanted to erect a

new building jointly on the same site as the old, again others wanted a new building on a different site, and a few wanted to separate from each other entirely. As no agreement seemed possible the matter was dropped for several years.

During these years the Reformed congregation continued to grow in membership, and "as our congregation increased in membership, the desire became strong to possess our own building so that services might be held each Sunday; for on account of owning the building with the Lutherans we could hold services only every other Sunday."\*

Several congregational meetings were called "to discuss the matter, but as soon as the raising of seven or eight thousand dollars was mentioned, the people got scared and dispersed without definite action."\*

The need became so imperative that finally in 1858, Rev. Herbruck determined on heroic action:

"I drew up a subscription list and wrote my own name at the top for \$150, which was equal to a year's salary from the congregation. Then I went from farm to farm and in the town from house to house and in three or four weeks \$4000 had been subscribed. Then I called the congregation together again, presented the subscription list, and tried to show the people that this amount would suffice to get a new church under roof; and when we were that far the good Lord would supply ways and means to finish the building. Then the people took new courage."\*

After the congregation had decided to build a new church, the next step was to select a suitable site. The people were unanimously of the opinion that the church ought to be built on the western half of the large plot owned by the two congregations, and a committee was appointed to confer with the Lutheran congregation to ascertain whether they would agree to this, or whether they preferred to buy the Reformed share of the property or would sell theirs. The committee was

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.

promptly informed that the Lutheran congregation would not accept any of the propositions.

"A second proposition was then made the Lutheran congregation; namely, whether they would give us the right to build, provided we presented them with our share of the joint property, including the church building, with all its contents such as bell, stove, etc. This proposition, also, was rejected."\*

The cause of this uncompromising attitude was the pastor, Rev. Nunemacher, who had been in Canton for only a year, and persuaded the people that a fine, new church erected by the Reformed people so near the old building would result in a large loss of members to the Lutherans, since, "No one would then go to the old church any more."

"Another congregational meeting was then held to determine the next step. At this meeting a lawyer, whose wife was a member of our church, was present, and he persuaded us to go ahead with our building project, by saying that the Lutheran congregation could not prevent us from building and also that they could never claim a share in the new building. Owing to the assurances of this lawyer we decided to begin building."\*

A building committee was then appointed to take charge of the matter. Conrad Schweitzer was made treasurer of the building-fund, and Ludwig Ohliger, Peter Preyer, Heinrich Bergman, Joseph Herschy, Johannes Glass, and Christian Vogelgesang were the other members of the committee. The committee at once began the work of formulating plans for the new building and securing more subscriptions. Most of the work of securing the necessary funds devolved upon the pastor. Members of other denominations also extended a helping hand. One of these "gave \$100, another \$50, and still another \$25. Even quite a number of Catholics offered their help."\* All of the heavy lumber necessary for the entire building was donated by Mr. Meyer, who at that time owned extensive tracts of timberland about Meyer's Lake. The circumstances connected with the donation were so interesting that the older members of our

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.

congregation still delight in telling them. It must therefore be a matter of peculiar gratification to the present generation that the story has been preserved as written down by Rev. Herbruck himself:

"One day as I was going up the street I met a man who was a Catholic. He possessed a large tract of timber near the town. He said to me, 'I hear that you are going to build a new church.' That is our intention, Mr. Meyer, was my answer. 'Well,' said he, 'I will make you a nice offer.' So I inquired what sort of an offer he had to make. Then he answered, 'If you will come out to my home, I will show you a tree, and if you will chop down that tree yourself, I will not only give you that tree but as many more as you will need for beams, posts, rafters, etc., for the entire church.' I immediately pulled out my little subscription book and said: Mr. Meyer, I accept your offer with gratitude; please, put it down into my little book with your name. Then I also will sign my name agreeing to chop down the tree which you will show me. So we made the contract together.

"Several days after I went to the home of Mr. Meyer with three members of the building committee. He showed me a tree about three feet in diameter. An ax was offered me which had a new handle. This handle was rather rough. I began chopping away. After about three hours, the tree fell; but the blood was running from my hands. But everyone who saw that stump had to laugh for it certainly was frightfully mangled. Not being used to handling an ax, I had struck a new place with every lick. The stump was, as the Pennsylvania German would say, 'schrecklich verkutzt' (frightfully scratched up)."\*

This tree was carefully laid aside and was later given the honor of being used as the center timber in the steeple. In the course of time it has become so hard that it is practically impossible to drive a nail into it. It is quite certain, therefore, that the old tree would again draw first blood from any minister

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.



who would be unfortunate enough to be obliged to chop it in two.

The reason why the Catholics of Canton were so willing to assist in the erection of a Protestant church was found in the personal friendship between Rev. Herbruck and Rev. John Baptist Uhlman, the priest in charge of the St. Peter's Catholic Church. He also gave valuable suggestions concerning the arrangement and architecture of the contemplated building. This friendship between the two ministers continued until Rev. Uhlman returned to Germany. As a farewell gift he presented Rev. Herbruck with a complete set of the sermons of the noted German Protestant preacher, Franz Volkmar Reinhard.

The advertisement given the new church project by the chopping down of the first tree by the pastor helped very substantially in securing the promise of further building-material and subscriptions, so that the successful completion of the church was assured. When this fact was perceived by the Lutherans, they decided to hinder the building by every means available, and a long-drawn-out legal contest ensued that proved very expensive to both sides, created much bitterness of feeling, and finally resulted in a compromise whose terms were the same as those previously offered by the Reformed people.

This part of the history we will take verbatim from the reminiscences of Rev. Herbruck:

"The building material was finally brought to the place where we were going to build. The foundation was almost completed when the Lutherans brought suit against us. The sheriff came with an injunction, and we had to quit working. For almost two years the matter was before the court. The trial was postponed from time to time intentionally in order that our material and foundation might be ruined. In fact it was necessary later on to tear out the entire foundation.

"Then our opponents made every effort to stir up the people who had subscribed for the building, so that they would refuse to pay their subscriptions. They boasted that the church would never be built. In the meanwhile the war between the

North and the South broke out and many of the members lost their courage. But I felt that I could not give up the project so easily. From the judge I learned that there was no law in the state of Ohio according to which joint church-property could be divided. When I learned this, I started for Columbus to see whether the legislature would not soon pass such a law. Another man from our county who was intimately acquainted with several members of the legislature accompanied me. I also was well acquainted with two members of the legislature. The one was and remains to this day an active member of the Reformed church and the other had Reformed parents. My journey to Columbus was not in vain. In a short time a law legalizing the division of joint church-property was passed.\*

"Now we went to court again requesting the division of the joint church-property. The request was granted. However, the Lutherans found yet another way open to still further delay our building operations; for they could appeal to the Supreme Court. This was promptly done. They knew that now they would have to pay us half the value of the old church building; but by appealing, they believed that our church building could be delayed several years. In this way they hoped to force us to renew our former proposition to them, namely, to give them our share in the old church.

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\* This bill was introduced by Jacob A. Ambler, a member of the House of Representatives, and was passed March 26, 1859. It is very brief, containing only four sections. Of these the first and most important forms more than one-third of the bill and is worded as follows:

Section 1. That in all cases where two religious societies or congregations, by gift or purchase, have procured land upon which to erect a house of public worship and other buildings for church or school purposes, and for a burial ground and cemetery, in common, and either of said societies or congregations shall be desirous of abandoning the joint or common use of said house of public worship or other erections, it shall be competent for the court of common pleas upon application of either of said societies or congregations, to make partition of the use of said common property, except the burial ground and cemetery, which may continue to be used in common.

"In the spring of 1861, a citizen of our town took up the matter. Although no member of the Reformed church, he was nevertheless a true friend of the Reformed congregation. This citizen, whose name was Louis Gibbs, visited the leaders of the Lutheran congregation in their homes and with his suave, gentle, and persuasive speech succeeded in removing the existing difficulties by means of two committees appointed by the two congregations. The joint property was divided. The Lutheran congregation took the eastern half, and the Reformed congregation took the western half. According to the terms of the settlement the Reformed congregation was forced to present their interest in the old church to the Lutherans.

"The long-drawn suit, as well as the interruption in the building, caused the Reformed church a loss of at least one thousand dollars.

"A new building committee was selected consisting of Ludwig Bauereis, Heinrich Schack, and George Deuble. Conrad Schweitzer remained as treasurer of the building fund.

"Now the building commenced again. The first foundation was torn out and replaced by a new one. A true friend and member of the church who had already subscribed \$200, also donated the large, cut stone for the new foundation. During the first summer the building was put under roof without any debts. During the winter new subscriptions were gathered. Most of the lumber for the inside work I received from the members of the country congregations which belonged to the charge. In the spring work began again. While the carpenters and plasterers were completing the interior work, our women were busily engaged in collecting money for a bell. The bell was ordered, but, instead of one bell, two arrived. The dear friend who had already furnished the stones for the new foundation, had ordered a second bell at his own expense. This bell he named after his own name the "Schweitzerglocke." This name he had engraved in the bell. In the fall of 1862 it was possible to dedicate the church to the Lord free of debt. In the corner stone of the church a document was placed which

will narrate to the folks of a later generation, how the Reformed church of Canton was treated by a Lutheran church.\*

The names of the members of the two societies of women who assisted loyally in raising funds for the new building, as well as much additional information concerning the erection of the building itself will be given in the next chapter.

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.







INTERIOR OF THE THIRD CHURCH BUILDING  
*Taken about 1880*

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE CORNER STONE WITH ITS CONTENTS AND THE DEDICATION

THE work on the new church progressed so favorably that by June 23, 1861 the corner stone could be laid. The rapid progress of the building operations was due largely to the untiring efforts of Rev. Herbruck. He displayed an "unwearied zeal, and feared no effort nor exertion to bring the work that had been begun to a successful conclusion."\*

A great multitude had assembled to witness the ceremonies of laying the corner stone. As many as could find room crowded into the old church. Every square inch of space was occupied by the audience which was estimated at about eight hundred souls. Rev. Robert Kohler, pastor of the Mt. Eaton, Ohio, church, preached the German sermon on the text Ezra 3: 10-11, "And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of Jehovah, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise Jehovah . . . and they sang one to another in praising and giving thanks unto Jehovah, saying, For he is good, for his loving-kindness endureth forever." Rev. Buckingham, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church then delivered an English sermon, choosing for his text I Chron. 22: 19, "Now set your heart and your soul to seek after Jehovah your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of Jehovah God, to bring the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of Jehovah."

At the close of this service the audience marched over to the site where the new church was being built. An immense crowd surrounded the foundation walls and overflowed into the cemetery adjoining. The people in attendance were estimated at not less than twenty-five hundred. They had come

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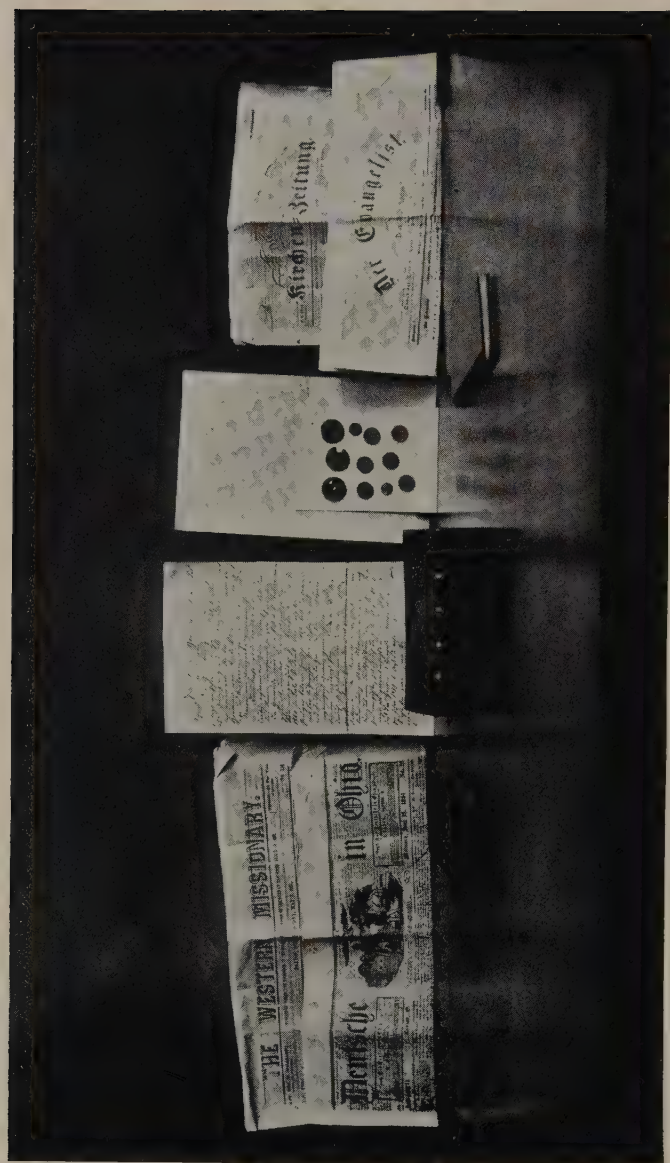
\* Report in "The Evangelist."

not only from Canton but also from all the country congregations served by Rev. Herbruck. The music was furnished by the choirs of the Canton and Paris congregations, who sang alternatively both at the service and the corner stone ceremonies. The pastor displayed "the usual articles for the corner-stone, a Bible, a hymn-book, a catechism, etc." These were placed into a copper box which was thereupon soldered shut and deposited in the iron receptacle sunk into the corner stone. The pastor then spread a layer of plaster upon the top and the work was completed. The services were brought to a close by the reading of the 96th Psalm by Rev. Herbruck, prayer by Rev. Buckingham, and the benediction by Rev. Herbruck. The offering amounted to \$54. An unusual innovation for a German church was introduced in the taking of this offering; for, to the amazement of the audience, some of the women of the congregation passed around and collected the money.

The contents of a corner stone are always of peculiar interest to the later generations. Rev. Herbruck in his "Reminiscences" had declared that "into the corner stone of the church a document was placed which will narrate to the folks of a later generation how the Reformed Church of Canton was treated by a Lutheran Church." Owing to the meager scraps of information preserved from that period of our history, the consistory decided to open the corner stone and have the enclosed documents copied. After the publication of this history, all the original contents of the corner stone together with a copy of the history and the latest published roll of the members will again be deposited in the original receptacle and walled in as at the beginning.

When the church was enlarged and remodelled in 1899, a new front was put on the entire building. The corner stone was thus completely hidden behind the new brickwork. Although scores of members were still living who had walked by the corner stone countless times, not one could be found who was willing to assert with absolute assurance whether the stone was on the southwest or southeast corner of the old part of the building. Opinion however, seemed to incline towards the





THE CONTENTS OF THE CORNERSTONE

*History of Church by Rev. Herbruck*  
Hymn Book

*Bible*

*History by Dr. Danziger and Coins*  
Catechism



southeast corner. Accordingly Elder Godfrey Snyder and the pastor attacked the job of getting out the coveted documents on Wednesday afternoon, September 9, 1914. It proved to be a laborious undertaking owing to the new brickwork which had been built entirely around the corner, making it extremely difficult to get to the desired point. About ten bricks were removed from the face of the old wall which made it possible to dig behind the new portion without disturbing it. Elder Snyder did practically all of the work, the pastor being obliged to content himself with furnishing the necessary encouragement. The inside bricks and plaster were found in perfect condition and extremely solid. After about two hours labor the iron lid of the corner stone receptacle was struck. That was a glad moment for the workers; but much hard digging was required before the copper box could finally be cut open and the contents removed.

In the meantime several more people had assembled and were waiting for the moment when the contents buried for more than half a century should be brought forth. Among these were Elder Adam Thomas, Karl Raber, Karl Snyder, Mrs. Elizabeth Bolliger, and several small children.

Sunk into the corner stone was a strong iron box eleven by eight by six inches in size, covered by a close fitting lid. Within this was a heavy copper box soldered shut so as to be perfectly air and water-tight. Within this box the following objects were found: a large German Bible  $7\frac{3}{4}$  by 5 by 2 inches in dimensions; a German union hymnal prepared for Reformed and Lutheran congregations, published by Wilhelm Radde of New York, and still extensively used by union congregations; a Heidelberg Catechism; copies of four newspapers, namely, "Der Deutsche in Ohio" dated June 19, 1861, published in Canton; "Der Evangelist," Cleveland, Ohio, of June 15, 1861; "Die Reformierte Kirchenzeitung," Chambersburg, Pa., of June 1, 1861, and "The Western Missionary," Dayton, Ohio, of May 2, 1861; two historical documents, one written by Rev. Peter Herbruck, and the other by Dr. Danziger; eleven coins, namely, four Indian-head cents, two eagle

cents, three old style cents bigger and heavier than a quarter, one half-dime and one three-cent piece. Two of the big cent pieces had portions punched out of them. The donor of these probably desired these bits as souvenirs. In addition to these articles the tanners who did the tinwork and the painter wrote their names on a card and threw it in so that their name and fame might not be lost to the coming generations. The tanners were Lewis M. Slusser, John J. Clark, H. V. Russell. The painter was E. Stover.

The document written by Rev. Herbruck in which he gives a sketch of the history of the congregation is of so much value that it alone would have abundantly repaid the labor of opening the corner stone. The translation of this interesting account is here given, with two corrections which are placed in brackets:

*"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen."*

"The corner stone of this church was laid in the year of our Lord, 1861, on Sunday, the 23d day of June; during the time that Abraham Lincoln was president of the United States, and William Dennison was Governor of the State of Ohio; and at the time when the secession of several states from the Union had brought about a civil war.

"The church was built by the First Reformed congregation of this community, and is to have the name The Reformed Jerusalem's Church. The congregation was gathered by Rev. J. P. Mahnenschmidt, who, however, as he was not stationed here, visited the congregation only from time to time; until in the year 1820 [The date is not given correctly. It should be 1818.] a regular pastor was obtained in the person of Rev. B. Faust. In the year 1823, the Reformed congregation united with the Lutheran congregation of this place in buying a piece of ground for a burial place, because the two congregations at that time were still weak and without means.

"However, there never existed that peace and harmony that should have been present. Frictions and dissensions unfortunately came up frequently. But regardless of this, and in

spite of the fact that the growth of the Reformed Church was deliberately hindered, the membership during the last twenty-eight years increased more than sevenfold, and it is plainly to be seen that the Lord has been with us. The congregation now numbers almost 300 members. [The figures given do not agree with the facts and conclusions presented in Chapter V. The most probable explanation is that Rev. Herbruck's memory led him to confuse individual members and families at the moment of writing this document. Canton had almost 300 individual members in 1861. One-seventh of this number would be about forty. The records still extant prove that this number if taken as individuals is far too small; but if it represents families the result would be about 130 to 150 individuals, which agrees with the conclusions of the fifth chapter. The "frictions and dissensions" spoken of did not begin until about 1840.] In the year 1859, the Reformed congregation decided to build a church for their own use. They immediately began the building on the same piece of ground which, as has already been said, had been bought by the two congregations together. But when the foundation was barely half finished, the Lutheran congregation brought suit against the Reformed congregation, and building had to be postponed. Every proposition of the Reformed congregation for a peaceable solution of the matter was rejected by the Lutheran congregation. Yea, even when the Court of Common Pleas had rendered its decision and had ordered a division of the joint property, the Lutherans appealed to the State Supreme Court. Although there were no prospects that the Supreme Court would render a different verdict than the one already given by the Court of Common Pleas, they nevertheless sought to hinder the building as long as possible.

"In the spring of 1861, a citizen of our town took up the matter; although no member of the church, he was nevertheless a true friend of the Reformed congregation. This citizen whose name was Louis Gibbs, visited the leaders of the Lutheran congregation in their homes and with his suave, gentle, and persuasive speech succeeded in removing the existing difficulties by means of two committees appointed by the two

congregations. The joint property was divided. The Lutheran congregation took the eastern half, and the Reformed congregation took the western half. The project was then taken up anew by the congregation, subscriptions were gathered, and all necessary arrangements were made to bring the building to its completion.

"The long-drawn suit, as well as the interruption in the building, caused the Reformed church a loss of at least one thousand dollars. Mr. C. Schweitzer was elected treasurer of the building fund by the congregation, and the brethren Ludwig Bauereis, Heinrich Schack, and George Deuble constituted the building committee. All these brethren are very enthusiastic in the good work, and are assisting it with great self-denial and sacrifice.

"Rev. P. Herbruck has been the minister of the congregation for twenty-nine years. The present consistory consists of the brethren Jacob Liphart and Ludwig Bauereis as elders; and Heinrich Schack, Johannes Weber, Michael Miller, and Daniel Schmidt as deacons.

"To assist in the building, two woman's sewing societies were also formed, namely, a Woman's Society, and a Maiden's Society.

"The Woman's Society consists of the following sisters:

Mrs. Langhaus, President.

Sophie Harshold,

Nanetta Schweitzer,

Elizabeth Schilling,

Caroline Dewies,

Marie Ohliger,

Katherine Leiter,

Mary Herbruck,

Christine Grofmler,

Caroline Blum,

Frau Bauman,

Susanne Deuble,

Magdalena Schack,

S. Herbruck,

Maria Baemer,

Katherine Weber,

Frau Merz,

Caroline Deuble, Treasurer.

Katherine Paar,

Mary Glass,

Barbara Schmidt,

Elizabeth Blum,

Rosina Hexamer,

Louise Stahler,

Barbara Kuhr,

Rosina Mack,

Katherine Vogelgesang,

Anna Bauereis,

Caroline Gibbs,

Charlotta Glass,

Katherine Schmidt,

Elizabeth Vogelgesang,

Katherine Delb.

"The Maiden's Society consists of the sisters:

Caroline Schuff, President,  
Lorena Schuff,  
Aurelia Bauhof,  
Elizabeth Schuff,  
Sarah Smith,  
Louise Rank,  
Louise Stahler,  
Louise Glass,  
Anna Ulrich,  
Susanna Schack,  
Amelia Stuerhoff,

Catherine Einnerich,  
Lorena Rank,  
Elizabeth Heingartner,  
Mary Miller,  
Catherine Kaufman,  
Elizabeth Ulrich,  
Elizabeth Schack,  
Mary Boas,  
Amelia Herbruck,  
Helena Koehler,  
Blandina Miller.

"The following preachers were present at the laying of the corner stone: R. Koehler, Rev. Buckingham, and the local pastor, P. Herbruck.

"Rev. R. Koehler preached from the words of Ezra 3: 10-11 in the German language, and Rev. Buckingham on the words found in I Chron. 22: 19.

"When the building of this edifice was begun two years ago, the building committee consisted of the brethren Ludwig Ohliger, Peter Preyer, Heinrich Bergman, Joseph Herschy, Johannes Glass, Christian Vogelgesang and Father Koenig.

"These men were all very enthusiastic for the good work, especially did Ludwig Gluger distinguish himself in the work."

P. HERBRUCK, Preacher of the congregation.

"Mr. F. Dressel built the foundation of the church.

"Mr. McGregor furnished the foundation stones.

"Mr. John Schuff laid the foundation stones.

"Mr. H. Biemendoerfer did the carpenter work."

In addition to the above document, there was also a second written by Dr. Danziger in which another brief historical sketch is given. As this is a mere repetition of the facts presented by Rev. Herbruck, it is omitted, with the exception of the close, which contains some interesting information on the price of the "means of living," which is given in part. Wheat was selling at \$1.00 a bushel, oats for 25 cents, rye for 50 cents, corn for 35 cents, potatoes for 25 cents. Butter was eight



cents a pound, and eggs were seven cents a dozen. "Provisions have fallen in price owing to the war with the southern states."

Although the breaking out of the Civil War, and the consequent demoralization of business and industrial conditions, added to the difficulty of raising the needed funds, the members of the congregation worked on undismayed. During the summer, the walls went up, and the roof was put on without incurring any debts. Then during the fall and winter a new campaign for subscriptions was carried on. The wood for finishing the inside was given by members of the country congregations. In the spring (1862) the carpenters and plasterers could be started to work again. The Women's Societies were working and collecting to secure money enough for a bell, and finally in the fall all things were ready for the dedication.

The dimensions of the new church were 80 by 48 feet with a height of 28 feet. The steeple was 145 feet high and could be plainly seen over the entire town that did not boast of many high buildings at that time. Two bells had been installed in the tower; the one had been secured by the diligence of the women, the other had been presented by Conrad Schweitzer. The windows contained only plain glass, and were protected without by huge shutters. The organ was placed in the center of the gallery, and the pulpit stood in the center where the choir loft now is.\* The pews were perfectly straight with square ends and were arranged so as to give a wide central aisle, and a narrower aisle on each side. The necessary heat was furnished by a giant stove placed in the center of the building, with about forty-five feet of stove-pipe leading to the chimney near the northwest corner. The church was seldom used in the evening, though provisions were made for lighting the auditorium by means of lamps fastened to the walls and provided with reflectors.

Sunday, October 5, was selected for the day of dedication. A great multitude of people assembled. The five coun-

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\* The recess, where the pipe organ now stands was not built until Rev. Rust's pastorate; at which time also the window west of the organ recess was walled shut.

try congregations still served by Rev. Herbruck sent large delegations. "The new house of God could not contain them all. In the church at least 800 persons had assembled." Rev. Robert Kohler, pastor of the Reformed Church in Akron, preached at the German service in the morning on the subject "The Great Significance of the House of God." The text was taken from Gen. 28: 17, "How dreadful is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." After the sermon, the building was dedicated by the pastor to the service of the Triune God. In the afternoon an English service was held. Rev. Buckingham of the Presbyterian Church, Canton, preached. By a peculiar coincidence he had selected the same text that had been used by Rev. Kohler in the morning. In the evening Rev. David Kaemmerer, pastor of the Reformed Church at Wooster, preached on the text, Psalm 26: 8, "Jehovah, I love the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy glory dwelleth." At each service the building was crowded with attentive hearers.

An offering of \$150 was brought during the day. A debt of several hundred dollars still rested upon the new building.

The Canton congregation had now grown to such a membership that the people demanded one service each Sunday. This necessitated the giving up of several of the country congregations belonging to the charge, leaving only the Canton, Osnaburg, Paris, and St. Jacob's (Cairo) congregations to be served by Rev. Herbruck. The pastor's salary also was correspondingly increased. During the first twenty years, the Canton congregation paid Rev. Herbruck less than \$100 a year as salary; during the next ten years, he received \$150; as one after another of the country congregations had to be dropped because Canton demanded more of the minister's time, the salary was increased until in 1870 it amounted to \$750 without parsonage.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE INEVITABLE ENGLISH AND A FEW OTHER THINGS

WHEN the new church was dedicated, all the regular services of the Canton congregations were still conducted in German. Already during the pastorate of Rev. Benjamin Faust some English had been necessary and was willingly granted. When Rev. Peter Herbruck became pastor of the charge he was unable to officiate in the English language; and in later years, although he became quite proficient in English, he steadily refused to use it for public discourse or sermon. As early as 1837 a small group of members left the Canton congregation and united with the English speaking Lutherans in the organization of the Trinity Lutheran Church. During the next fifteen years, the controversies that raged over the questions of temperance, change of language and the new-measure movement caused the loss of scores of members in Canton.

The coming of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1851 started a boom in population and industries. Manufactories for the production of harvesting machinery, farm implements, tools and other necessities were erected. A large influx of population followed. The town grew from 2000 in 1850 to 4000 in 1860, and had reached 9000 in 1870. Many of the new-comers were Germans and Swiss, for these were the years of a phenomenal German immigration. The Reformed congregation therefore grew rapidly and actually contained a larger number of German adult members than ever before. Under these circumstances Rev. Herbruck became the more determined not to permit any English to be used at the regular services, even though the American born members and their children might ask for it.

After the new church was built the demand for some Eng-



TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH  
*North Market Street and Sixth*





lish became insistent. Rev. J. H. Good, D.D.,\* in 1871 describes the situation in Canton in these words, "The organization (of an English congregation) was delayed much too long. Twenty years ago (that is about 1850) we should have had such a congregation. We have lost immensely by the delay. If the families that were once members of the Reformed Church, but are now scattered among other English organizations in Canton, were gathered together, they would make by far the wealthiest and strongest congregation in the place."\*\*

Though Rev. Herbruck was absolutely opposed to the introduction of English into his German congregation, he gradually became convinced that an English congregation ought to be organized to prevent the constant loss of Reformed members to other denominations on account of the language. He also offered to assist an English organization to the extent of his ability. The development of this new attitude will be given in his own words:

"Several years after our church had been built, the Ohio Synod of the Reformed Church held its annual session in the new building (1864). A number of the English brethren did not seem to like it very well that the congregation was still all German. I received many a broad hint that English ought to be introduced speedily. Not very long after the Synod meeting I got a letter from one of the prominent English brethren in which he said, "Brother Herbruck, there must be English preaching in your congregation." I answered, "No, in my congregation there will be no regular English preaching. The congregation is German and shall remain German." Soon another letter came reminding me that unless English was introduced, our young people would soon be lost to the congregation. My answer was, "Canton lies before you. If the English brethren desire an English congregation, let them come and organize

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\* Dr. Good had been a professor in the college and the theological seminary, Tiffin, Ohio for a score of years, and was intimately acquainted with the conditions in the congregation.

\*\* Christian World, Oct. 19, 1871.

one." I offered to assist them to the extent of my ability; but refused to permit regular English preaching in my congregation.

"When it was finally discovered that Brother Herbruck could not easily be persuaded to do something which he did not consider to be good, the decision was reached to organize a new congregation in the city of Canton."†

On November 24, 1870, the consistory unanimously authorized the pastor to call a congregational meeting to vote on the question of allowing an English congregation about to be organized, the use of the church. This congregational meeting was held January 22, 1871. One hundred and two votes were cast. Of these only sixteen were opposed to the granting of the request. It was also resolved, that, "The church may be occupied by the Second Reformed congregation when not used by the German congregation; the Second congregation paying half for heating, cleaning, and lighting the church."

On April 6, the consistory of the mother-church and the consistory of the Second congregation "when regularly organized" met and drew up rather elaborate and legally phrased "Articles of Agreement" which were signed by all the members of the two consistories. In these articles it was stipulated that, "The congregation, when regularly organized, styled the Second Reformed Congregation, may have the use, for divine service, of the German Reformed Jerusalem's Church, at such seasons or hours when not occupied by the German congregation, their minister being umpire as to time, from April 1, 1871 to April 1, 1872; provided they will agree . . . to pay expenses according to the number of times occupied by their congregation during the year, for cleaning, warming, and lighting the church . . . for the payment of which money the said consistory of the Second part, do individually and collectively bind themselves and their successors in office."

Rev. J. B. Schumacher became the first pastor of the new congregation, which he organized with eighteen charter mem-

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† Herbruck Reminiscences.

bers. In a few months the number had increased to thirty and the desire arose to acquire their own church property.

Rev. Herbruck heartily sympathized with this plan and offered to support it handsomely. His experiences in this connection are graphically described by himself :

“About this time the Baptist church offered their building for sale, intending to build a larger church on a new location. It was a brick building, almost as good as new, near the center of the town, and of about the same size as the building later erected by the English Reformed Church. I went to the official board of the Baptist church and inquired concerning the price. The church and lots were offered me for \$4000. Then I made the English Reformed congregation the proposition to buy this church ; offering personally to give \$200, and one of my sons promised \$500. In this way the congregation itself would have had to raise only \$3300. My well-intended proposition was at once refused. The \$200 from me and the \$500 from my son were indeed fondly desired, but the English church must remain close to the German. A lot was therefore bought near the German church and about \$3300 was paid for it. Then a frame church was built for about \$3500. If my advice had been accepted, the English congregation would have had a church almost in the center of town, and would have saved \$3500, besides a considerable number of splendid members.”\*

The Second congregation received some missionary aid at the beginning, and Rev. Herbruck believed that some of the leaders in the Ohio Synod had deliberately directed the Second congregation to choose the East Tuscarawas Street location almost opposite the mother-church, because it had been determined that “Brother Herbruck must be made to pay something for his stubbornness,”\* in not introducing English services into his congregation. “The church to be built will therefore be put just as near as possible to the German church of Bro. Herbruck. The reason for this can easily be imagined.”\*

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\* Herbruck Reminiscences.

On Sunday, September 1, 1871, the corner stone was laid, and in a few months a neat frame church 40 by 36 feet with a bell-tower had been erected.

The purpose of the location opposite the old church soon revealed itself. Strenuous efforts were made to get members of the mother-church to go over. These efforts were continued for several years. Perhaps the methods used were not always discreet nor in accord with congregational courtesy; the inevitable result was a feeling of estrangement between the two congregations. It is certain that the development of the Reformed Church in Canton was thrown back for a quarter of a century by the short-sighted policy which dictated the location of the Second Church. The kindest judgment that the present generation can pass upon it, is that it was a strategic error.

The first frame building gave way to a commodious brick edifice in 1890, and this in turn was abandoned when the Trinity Congregation moved into the "fine, Greek Classic structure which stands so majestically on the slope of North Market Street Hill," in 1914. The membership now numbers 1554, with a Sunday school enrollment of 1700. The total annual offerings for all benevolent purposes are about \$6000.

The minutes of the consistory during this period reveal some striking little pictures from the shifting congregational life, which give an insight into some of the problems which had to be faced. Numerous cases of discipline occurred. Among the causes which were counted as sufficient for exclusion from church membership we find the following: refusal to pay the subscription for the building of the new church, berating the pastor without cause or reason, being general stumbling blocks, disturbing the congregational harmony, etc. One man was promptly and properly disciplined, "Because he declared at an election that if Herbruck would resign he would furnish a keg of beer to be drunk at the church."

During the period from 1862-75, it is plain that strenuous efforts were put forth to raise the standards for membership. In 1869 it was made a rule that, "No member who has ceased

attending the public worship and the Lord's Supper without cause shall be permitted to vote at elections that pertain to any spiritual matters." In 1870, all delinquent members were admonished that they must either do their Christian duty or else they "would have their names stricken from the church register." In 1871, the treasurer was instructed not to receive any money from those whose names still appeared on the roll "who do not lead a religious life that conforms to the requirements of our constitution or the tenets of our church." During this year the custom was also introduced of receiving members on six months' probation to determine whether they would prove desirable acquisitions or not. The practice was continued for a number of years. Finally in 1874, the consistory unanimously declared that, "We would hail with delight the upbuilding of a young men's Temperance Society in our midst" and steps were taken to organize such a society. Though but little practical benefit came from the attempt, the fact that the consistory took such action gave notice that a new era was inevitably dawning. At the same time the consistory also declared that, "We have watched with painful feelings, the gross immorality and careless demeanor of many who claim to be members of our church, and who also refuse in anywise to support the church, therefore, all such members who continue in their sins and refusal to do their Christian and church duties shall have their names stricken from the roll."

The reason for this better attention to church discipline must be found in the fact that Rev. Herbruck had gradually given up all the congregations outside of Canton, and hence could exercise more careful pastoral oversight in his one remaining congregation.

In 1862 when the Canton church was dedicated there were still six congregations in the charge. During the next years St. Martin's, St. Peter's, and St. Jacob's were dropped, Paris in 1871 and Osnaburg in 1872.

Soon after the dedication of the new church, a parochial schoolhouse was also erected, and a school was maintained for many years. Such information as is still available concerning



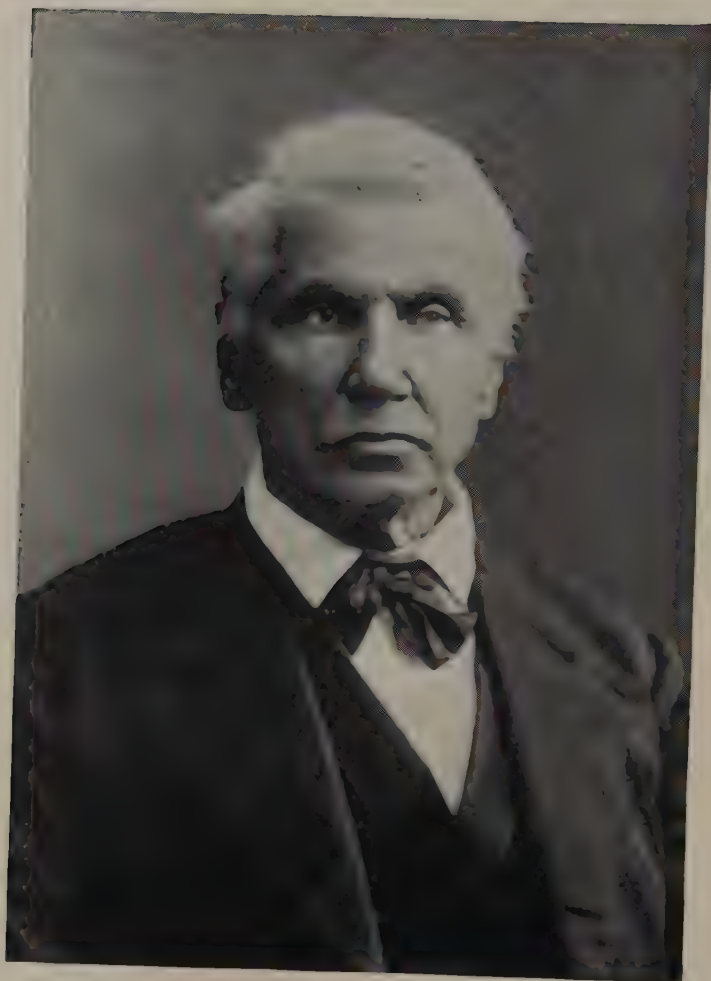
this interesting phase of congregational activity will be presented in a later chapter.

The cemetery that occupied most of the church plot except where the church stood was gradually abandoned. After the West Lawn Cemetery was opened many of the bodies were removed from the church's burying ground; but occasional interments still took place until 1874 when the congregation by a vote of thirty-one to ten forbade any further burials. Three soldiers of the Civil War are still buried there. Their names have been forgotten, the site of the graves must be guessed at, but each year on Memorial Day three G. A. R. flags are placed on the probable site of the graves. There they wave until wind and weather have torn them to shreds, as mute reminders to the passer-by, that the ground had once been hallowed to the departed by the tears and sorrows of the living.

The first year that the Canton congregation alone was served by Rev. Herbruck, he reported to the Classis that there were 494 members in the church, and 200 enrolled in the Sunday school. Thirty-six had been confirmed, and 89 baptized, and \$293 were given for benevolence.

In 1875 Heidelberg College recognized the long and influential career of Rev. Herbruck by granting to him the honorary title of Doctor of Divinity.





REV. PETER HERBRUCK, D.D.  
*At the time of his fiftieth anniversary, 1881*

## CHAPTER XVI

### CLOSING YEARS OF REV. HERBRUCK'S LIFE

THE last ten years of Rev. Peter Herbruck's pastorate were unmarked by any special event in the development of the congregation. The number of additions from year to year made up for the losses, and also showed a slight increase. The physical vigor of the pastor under the strenuous activities of half a century had been depleted. Though he still forced himself to meet all his appointments,\* his hold was gradually slipping. Frequently, especially during the last five years, he would have to stop after speaking for a few minutes and say with a sigh, "I am too weak to preach any longer, we will have to close for to-day."

The natural result was a gradual scattering of the congregational forces. The congregation still loath to lose their aged pastor made various efforts, from 1880 on, to secure his son, the Rev. Emil Herbruck of Akron, Ohio, as assistant pastor. Failing in this effort, several other ministers were invited to preach trial sermons with the view of becoming assistant pastor, but no suitable assistant could be secured. Rev. Herbruck therefore continued his labors until January, 1886.

One event of these years, however, stood out and is still frequently spoken of by the older members of the church, and that was the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Rev. Herbruck's landing upon American soil, and the forty-ninth anniversary of his permanent connection with the Canton congregation as pastor. The joyous event occurred on Sunday, December 4, 1881.

The church was festooned with evergreens. The pulpit was decked with flowers, on the north wall of the church was a

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\* At the fiftieth anniversary service, Rev. Herbruck stated that only six times during all the years of his pastoral labors had sickness prevented him from meeting an appointment.

large inscription in evergreens reading, 1831-1881, and everywhere banners were on display. At the morning service Rev. H. J. Ruetenik, D.D., of Cleveland, Ohio, a lifelong friend of the pastor, preached in German on the parable of the ten virgins. "It was an able sermon full of good thoughts and valuable suggestions, the principal lesson drawn from the text being the necessity of, at all times, being ready to avail ourselves of the various opportunities for advancement that are given us throughout our life."

Rev. Herbruck then gave a sketch of his life with many an anecdote both droll and serious.

In honor of the occasion the Ladies' Aid Society presented the pastor's wife with a silver tea set, and the congregation gave the pastor a gold medal. On one side, "In raised work of yellow gold was a Bible with a crown resting upon it, both encircled with a laurel wreath." On the reverse side was a suitable, honorary inscription. At the afternoon service various ministers of the town gave brief congratulatory addresses. In the evening Rev. Joseph Keller, D.D., Randolph, Ohio, preached.

Rev. Peter Herbruck continued his labors until January, 1886, after which he lived in quiet retirement at the old homestead, corner of Tuscarawas Street, East, and Herbruck Court, until his death. After his retirement he still worshiped frequently with his former flock and performed many ministerial acts, such as baptisms, funerals, and marriages. The total number of these ministerial functions performed during his long career as pastor has been given as follows: baptisms 5938, confirmations 2717, marriages 2611, funerals 2560.\*

During the closing years of his life, Rev. Herbruck was very feeble. For several days before his death, the end was hourly expected. Finally on Sunday, September 22, 1895, he breathed his last.

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\* These figures were published at the time of Rev. Herbruck's death. The author has no means of testing their accuracy. There is considerable discrepancy in the figures as published at various times.



The funeral services were held on the following Tuesday. Rev. F. Strassner, D.D., and Rev. S. C. Goss, D.D., conducted the services at the home. The pallbearers were all ministers of the Reformed Church, namely John H. Beck, Alf. G. Berkeley, N. A. Ernst, S. G. Goss, D.D., J. J. Lebermann, D.D., and J. P. Stahl. From the house the funeral cortege proceeded to the Trinity Reformed Church. Addresses were delivered by Rev. Joseph Keller, D.D., president of St. John's Classis, Rev. E. R. Williard, who spoke for Ohio Synod and Tuscarawas Classis, and a representative of the Canton Ministerial Federation. The "Canton Repository" closed its account of the funeral services with the appropriate and sympathetic words, "As a preacher he had few equals, as a pastor he was beloved, and as a father he was kind and reserved."

A little more than two years later, on November 24, 1897, Mrs. Herbruck also was called to her reward.

The faithful couple who had lived happily together for a period of sixty-three years, fifty-three of which were spent as pastor and pastor's wife of the First Reformed Church, now lie buried side by side in West Lawn Cemetery.

During this period from 1831-1895 that Rev. Herbruck was pastor in Canton he saw the backwoods village of less than 2000 population, without any means of communication with the outside world except poorly-kept dirt roads, evolve into a thriving, up-to-date, industrial center of 28,000 souls, with three railroad systems giving perfect transportation facilities. The few shops, stores and mills of the early days, securing their supplies by wagon from Pittsburgh or the Ohio River, and serving only the immediate community, had been transformed into a receiving and distributing center, sending the diversified products of more than two hundred manufacturing plants into all parts of the world. The feeble congregations worshipping in humble, poorly equipped buildings had grown to great numbers assembling in spacious, comfortable and imposing edifices. But few men are permitted to thus grow up with a community and witness its progressive evolution.

## CHAPTER XVII

### EARLY LIFE AND LABORS OF REV. JOHN B. RUST

REV. John B. Rust at the special request of the author, kindly consented to write the history of his own pastorate in Canton. The narrative is given as prepared by him. In addition to the story of his work in Canton, he has also woven in many valuable historical incidents from the field which he previously served. As this field once also formed a part of the vast parish served by the Rev. Peter Herbruck, this additional historical material, most of which is not given elsewhere in this book, is included.

Rev. J. B. Rust was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, September 5, 1856. His father, Rev. Herman Rust, was pastor of the First Reformed Church of Cincinnati for twelve years. Later he was called to the "German Professorship" in Heidelberg Theological Seminary, and the "Professorship of the German Language and Literature" in Heidelberg College, Tiffin, Ohio. Young Rust attended the public schools in Cincinnati and Tiffin, and then took the full classical course in the college and seminary, graduating in the spring of 1879. During the following winter he began his work as pastor of the Waynesburg charge.

The narrative that follows is given as prepared by Rev. Rust.

"In the winter of 1879 and 1880 Rev. J. B. Rust entered upon the pastorate of the Waynesburg Charge, Stark County, Ohio, about twelve miles south of Canton. This was his first field of labor. Rev. F. Strassner, pastor of Christ Reformed Church, in Orrville, Ohio, thought at one time that he would assume the care of the Waynesburg charge himself, but afterwards changed his mind and used his influence to find a suitable incumbent instead, for that charge, which consisted of three congregations, St. Paul's Reformed Church in Waynesburg, St. Paul's Reformed Church in Mineral City, and the



REV. JOHN B. RUST, PH.D., D. D.



Salem's Church, Osnaburg Township. The latter congregation was organized by a group of seceders from St. Martin's Reformed Church, because they were not permitted to hold weekly prayermeetings in their house of worship and in their homes, and aspired after a warmer and more lively expression and method of religious life. The mother-church refused to befriend them and condemned their "Schwaermerei." In the hope that they might unite again at some future day with the St. Martin's congregation, they secured a piece of ground large enough for a small church, and a burying ground adjoining, and just as large as the property of the St. Martin's congregation. On that spot they built a white frame church large enough to accommodate their membership, but for constitutional reasons they organized as an Evangelical Church in the nearby hamlet of Mapleton, and when their house of worship was completed, Rev. Peter Herbruck conducted the dedicatory services, having been invited to do so because he had offered his assistance for a merely nominal gift, in order, if possible, to guide the faithful flock back again into the Reformed Church. Finding themselves unable to support a pastor independently, they united with the Reformed congregation in Alliance, and were served by the Rev. August C. F. Schade, Ph.D., a gifted and brilliant German pulpit orator, who, during that time, resided in Malvern, a village almost midway between the Salem's church and Mt. Union. Through the efforts and direct instrumentality of the Rev. Mr. Schade, the Salem's congregation, on the plea that they were an Evangelical church knocking at the door of the Reformed Church for admittance, were received into the fellowship with the Central Synod. At one time during the pastorate of Rev. J. B. Rust; the two congregations, largely under the mild guidance of Mr. Paul Geiger, entered into a compact of union, but through uncalled-for, unwise, unjustifiable remarks made by a few shortsighted persons, the noble plan was defeated. The two churches never united again. They did not even become reconciled, despite the fact that intermarriages among the members of those organizations frequently occurred. St. Martin's Church was



finally taken down and rebuilt in the village of Malvern, where the congregation abandoned the use of the German language entirely, and changed its character and temperament throughout, until it was finally dissolved, because of removals and loss of support, as a part of the Robertsville Charge, which at that time consisted of the Malvern, Robertsville, and Paris churches. Rev. Dr. J. J. Leberman organized the Robertsville congregation, and served Paris, Robertsville, and Osnaburg, in connection with the Louisville church, for many years.

"Rev. J. H. Klahr, residing in or near Navarre, for quite a number of years preached in Mineral City and Waynesburg. In Waynesburg, the Lutheran and Reformed people worshipped in the same church, and during the pastorates of Rev. Klahr, and Rev. Cronenwirth, the latter a narrow and bigoted Lutheran, a conflict arose concerning the hours of worship. The Lutherans were the aggressors, it seems, by reason of the fact that they periodically, without consulting the Reformed pastor or his consistory, appropriated the Reformed day of service. As a result the ministers met at one of these services and engaged in a hand to hand tussel for supremacy. It was the Reformed hour of worship. Rev. Klahr had already entered the pulpit, an old-fashioned elevated enclosure, and the gate in the chancel-rail was closed behind him. When the Rev. Mr. Cronenwirth approached, he was beaten back and vanquished by a liberal and forcible application of the Bible as a weapon of defense in the hands of the Rev. Mr. Klahr. The excitement was intense and the scene a memorable one. The bad odor of the affair continued to cling to the church for a long time. The incident led to the withdrawal of both pastors and the separation of the congregations. The case was taken to court. Attorney C. M. Bousch, of Meadville, Pa., represented the Reformed congregation, and Mr. Peter Sherer furnished the principal part of the money. Mrs. Reinhardt, a leading member, the mother of the late Rev. James Reinhart, was also very helpful. After the Lutherans failed in their effort to oust the remnant of Reformed people in and around Waynesburg from their rightful interest in the joint property, they

disposed of their undivided half ownership in the church and grounds and erected a new Lutheran church on the eastern border of the village. Rev. Klahr continued to preach in Mineral Point for a little while longer. At this juncture Rev. F. Strassner seized the reins of influence in behalf of the charge, as already stated, and planned to secure a pastor to succeed Rev. Klahr. Ever since the incumbency of Rev. J. B. Rust as pastor of the Waynesburg Charge, that field of labor has never been vacant very long at any time. During the six happy and prosperous years that Rev. Rust spent in the charge, he frequently visited in the home of Rev. Peter Herbruck in Canton. He stood upon terms of close friendship with all the immediate members of the Herbruck family. When "Father" Herbruck, who had devoted the greater part of his life to his Canton pastorate, began to feel the infirmity of age, he besought his son, Rev. Dr. Emil P. Herbruck, then in Akron, to assume the direction of Jerusalem's Reformed congregation, and the people without a dissenting voice, seconded the earnest wishes of their aged pastor by twice extending an urgent call to his gifted son in Akron. During one of those visits he urged Rev. J. B. Rust to indicate his willingness to consider an invitation in case he should be unable to respond to his father's desire. But, even after he had expressed his readiness from the pulpit to become his father's assistant, and then his successor, he finally declined the call which had been given him by the congregation. Some time later on, Father Herbruck was overcome with weakness one Sunday morning in the pulpit, and had to be removed to his home. His long and faithful public service thus came to an end, and as a result, Rev. J. B. Rust, pastor of the Waynesburg charge, was invited to preach a trial sermon. Believing and hoping that Father Herbruck would recover his strength again, he offered to act as his substitute for several Sundays during the aged pastor's illness. An appointment was made, and after the service the consistory gathered around the visiting minister, in the church, and earnestly expressed to him their desire that he should become the successor of Father Herbruck. They asked him if he would give favorable con-

sideration to a call. He answered in the affirmative, on the one condition that he be permitted also to preach in the English language in the church. The members of the consistory, among them the lamented Elder Frederic Hipp, at once, without hesitation and most enthusiastically, confessed to him the absolute need of both German and English preaching in their church. Nevertheless he returned to Waynesburg with the solemn conviction that that large, conservative German congregation would never consent to introduce even the limited use of the English language at that juncture in their history. A few weeks later the call was actually received, and the young minister found himself at the parting of the ways. The call came during a canvass of the Waynesburg charge by Henry Leonard, "The Fisherman," in the interest of Heidelberg College, and that good brother, for a number of cogent reasons named by him, pleaded with the Waynesburg pastor not to accept the call, but to remain unquestioningly in the quiet, unostentatious, more peaceful and less hazardous country parish. "The Fisherman's" advice was listened to with respectful attention and the Canton call accepted. Rev. J. B. Rust moved to Canton by wagon overland in December 1885, and located in rooms in the home of Mrs. Susan Deuble, a widowed sister of Rev. Peter Herbruck, who lived at No. 92 North Market Street. The late Rev. Jacob Dahlmann, D.D., of Akron, Ohio, preached the installation sermon, and Rev. Frederick Strasser, D.D., of Orrville, Ohio, conducted the installation, on Tuesday evening, January 19, 1886.

"When Father Herbruck came to Stark County, Canton was a mere village. One day during a visit in the Herbruck home, while he was still pastor of the church, Father Herbruck took Rev. Rust with him in his buggy, to make a series of pastoral calls in the western part of the city, and pointed out the spot to him, along West Tuscarawas Street, just opposite the Dueber-Hampden buildings, where he, as a stripling of seventeen years, fresh from Germany, and unable to find employment in Canton, sat down under a tree, homeless and alone, apparently forsaken by everyone, and wept in sorrow and

hopelessness. A farmer, on his return from the village, found him there, sitting under the tree, took him home, and gave him food and shelter. Not long after this event he became acquainted with the Rev. Benjamin Faust, who induced him to enter upon the work of parochial school teaching in Canton, and to prepare himself for the Gospel ministry.

"Rev. Mahnenschmidt and Rev. Sonnendecker occasionally preached for the Reformed people, but Rev. Benjamin Faust was the first Reformed pastor who resided in Canton. The first resident Lutheran minister is said to have been Rev. Anthony Weyer. Rev. Faust became associated with the church in 1818. The Lutheran and Reformed people worshipped in the same church, the old frame building in West Tuscarawas Street, until 1823, and in the new brick church until 1862. Rev. Faust became seriously afflicted with bronchial trouble, and was compelled to retire from the active ministry. He died in 1832 and his body was laid to rest in the God's Acre immediately back of the present Reformed church edifice. When Rev. Faust could no longer minister to the congregation, Rev. Peter Herbruck, not yet twenty years old, was instructed to take full charge of the church. For a long time, as necessity demanded, in view of the condition of the period, Lutheran and Reformed pastors served the adherents of both confessions interchangeably, in neighborhoods in which it was impossible at that early day, to gather sufficient support for separate pastoral service. A little later on in the history of the country, union churches were erected conjointly by the Lutheran and Reformed people in country districts and village centers. Father Herbruck therefore in a number of instances gave catechetical instruction to Lutheran and Reformed children, and organized his classes accordingly. He used both Luther's smaller catechism and the Heidelberg Catechism, in response to the demands of the time, and the request of the parents. Finally the increase of population, the growth of denominational strength and needs, the language problem and other causes, called in a new era, in which the so-called union church was gradually abandoned, and the distinctively denom-



inational churches began to be built, to escape all the evils and to avoid all the half-hearted compromises associated with the union church. This occurred also in Canton. In 1860 the Reformed congregation withdrew from the union and erected their own church on the west corner of the block of lots in East Tuscarawas Street, where the two churches still stand. Mr. Conrad Schweitzer, Sr., liberally supported this enterprise. Rev. John Baptist Uhlmann, rector of St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, manifested warm interest in the erection of the Reformed church, and gave valuable suggestions on the subject of church architecture to Rev. Peter Herbruck. Born in Constance, Baden, February 19, 1804, and ordained by Archbishop Bernard Boll, September 17, 1828, he came to America from the Diocese of Freiburg to escape the disturbances of the Revolution of 1848, and by Bishop Rappe was appointed pastor of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Tiffin, Ohio. In May 1856 he was transferred to St. Peter's Church, Canton, Ohio. In June 1864 he was sent to St. Mary's Church, Sandusky, where he remained until July 1865, when he left the Cleveland diocese to return to his native land. He died at Bonndorf, Baden, February 18, 1882. Father Uhlmann was a man of deep and varied learning and an eloquent pulpit orator. When he left Canton, he presented Father Herbruck with a complete set of the sermons of the great German Evangelical preacher, Franz Volkmar Reinhard. Father Herbruck often spoke kindly of Father Uhlmann to the writer of this sketch. He revered the memory of the man to the end of his life.

"At an earlier day Father Herbruck periodically held services at a great many outlying points, ministering to the spiritual needs of the scattered and primitive communities of that day. He preached in Paris, Osnaburg, New Berlin, Bethlehem, Georgetown, Cairo, Uniontown, Carrollton, and other points. Many of his journeys were made on foot. He walked all the way from Canton to Carrollton every four or six weeks, on Saturday, a distance of twenty-four miles, preached on Sunday, and on the following Monday walked back to Canton. The people paid \$15 annually toward his support. They were poor,



and money was scarce. Thus at great personal sacrifice and amidst trying conditions, he served his Master by the labor he performed to extend the Kingdom of God. Finally when the congregation in Canton became so large that it taxed all his powers and energy to meet the needs of so many people, he withdrew from the country charges and devoted himself wholly to the Canton field."

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE PASTORATE OF REV. J. B. RUST

THE field into which Rev. J. B. Rust entered in January, 1886 was not strewn with roses. After a congregation has become inured for fifty-three and one-half years to one pastor it has become so thoroughly fixed in its traditions and ideals that a new pastor would find many problems waiting to be solved. Rev. Herbruck had always conducted the affairs of the congregation in a manner rather independent of the judicatories of the church; while the new pastor was zealous for "the principles of good order, and the provisions of the constitution of the Reformed Church."

Four things stand out most prominently in this pastorate of nearly four years:

First. A roll of the members was made and put on record for the first time. The nominal members of the congregation were scattered all over Stark County. Multitudes claimed to be members who never attended a service or contributed anything to the support of the church. Hundreds communed at Easter-time who were never seen again until the next Easter. Rev. Herbruck had kept no written church-roll. It had been his custom to carry the roll in his memory. The last report which he made to Classis mentioned 600 members. This figure did not stand for individuals who could be relied upon, but rather represented an estimate of the number who claimed to be members. The first task to which the new pastor and the consistory addressed themselves was the drawing up of a written roll. "The names and addresses of all the members of the congregation, individuals, and families, parents and children, were secured and duly registered in a church-book, or record." Unfortunately many who had long before forfeited every claim to membership, when approached, blithely said: Why, sure, we are members of the First Reformed Church. During the sub-



INTERIOR OF THIRD CHURCH BUILDING

*After remodeling and placing organ in front of church during Dr. Rust's pastorate  
The church is decorated for Harvest Home services*



sequent years many of the "dead branches" who had thus got on the roll had to be lopped off.

Secondly. English was introduced. Rev. Rust had refused to consider a call to Canton unless English should be introduced. "The members of the consistory at once, and most enthusiastically confessed to him the absolute need of both German and English preaching in their church." For half a century the First Reformed Church had been a feeder for the other churches of Canton, and for fifteen years, scores had been obliged to transfer to Trinity Reformed Church on account of the language. The new pastor soon introduced English evening services. "This forward step was taken without friction or misgiving, because all the members of the congregation fully realized the need of it in order that the young people, who preferred the English, might be given a more potent reason to show their continued loyalty to the church."

Thirdly. An advanced temperance position was taken. The traditions and habits of a considerable portion of the membership were decidedly "wet." The innocuous nature of the temperance resolutions which had sometimes been passed by the consistory is demonstrated by the fact that the church harbored a score of saloon-keepers as members. The "wet brethren" vociferously declared themselves in favor of "temperance according to the Scriptures." This phrase was interpreted as meaning full liberty to drink spirituous liquor when not carried to gross excess. Rev. Rust broke a brave lance with this "bunch" as he describes later in this chapter. His courageous stand aroused tremendous opposition, but by faithful reasoning from the Scriptures, he "allayed the storm, silenced the objectors, converted blind and angry opposition into sense and reason, and ushered in the dawn of a better era in the congregation in relation to consistent Christian conduct."

Fourthly. The church property was improved. An addition was built on the north side of the church, so that the organ which had been in the gallery for a quarter of a century could be placed in front of the audience. The instrument was also improved. The alterations cost more than \$3000.



The detailed narrative of these events will now be given in Rev. Rust's own words:

"Rev. John B. Rust succeeded Rev. Herbruck in the autumn of 1885, in response to the united action of the congregation, and the fraternal endorsement of the aged pastor. Father Herbruck, when this change came, had served the congregation for fifty-three years and six months. Very few pastors thus far in the history of Ohio have enjoyed so unusual a blessing and experienced so great an honor. In view of this fact it proved to be a difficult undertaking, both for the new pastor and for the church, to take up duties, responsibilities and burdens which had been fulfilled and borne with unflinching constancy for so many years by Father Herbruck, trained to the task by ripe experience. During his term of service, Father Herbruck baptized, confirmed, and married thousands of persons, and thus in the course of time gathered around him one of the largest congregations in the German wing of the Reformed Church west of the Allegheny Mountains. But the record of all this work was incomplete. At least the incoming pastor could not find any data to help him. During the Easter services, for example, people came to the church to receive Holy Communion, who claimed to belong to the congregation, and yet were seldom or never seen in the church at any other time. They had the idea that if they 'made their Easter' their obligation to God and His Church was discharged, and the faithful few could attend to the balance. Therefore the new pastor and the consistory inaugurated a plan by which the names and addresses of all the members of the congregation, individuals and families, parents and children, were secured and duly registered in a church-book, or record, purchased for the purpose. The congregation was not 'reorganized' as some supposed, but simply placed upon record as completely as possible, in obedience to the principle of good order and the provisions of the Constitution of the Reformed Church.

"Near the beginning of the new pastorate an improvement was made in the church edifice by the erection of a suitable

extension at the rear of the auditorium for the pipe-organ, and to accommodate the choir back of the pulpit platform, which was enlarged and built further out into the body of the church, to overcome an unfortunate and trouble-some echo. An organ-tuner from Pittsburgh had charge of the work of removing the organ from the choir-loft to the new place provided for it. The improvement cost the congregation somewhat over three thousand dollars.

"A little while before this alteration was made, on a dark and dreary Sunday, a young man, who was closely allied with several Swiss singing societies, especially the Grütli Verein, and who had frequently taken part, with his fine tenor voice, in the singing of the choir, came to the altar-railing immediately after the close of the service and asked for an interview with the pastor. At the conference after dinner in the pastor's study the man expressed an earnest desire to prepare for the Gospel ministry. He had entertained the desire for a number of years, but the opportunity to realize it had never been presented to him. He had taught school in the old country, and officiated at funerals. He was a sculptor by trade. He belonged to an excellent Swiss family. His avocation, however, at that time was not in keeping with his call to the ministry. He promised to give up all and follow Christ. He entered Calvin College in Cleveland, and when that school was by synodic action forbidden to teach theology, he moved to Tiffin with his family, and entered the Heidelberg Theological Seminary. He carried with him most excellent grades in scholarship, both in German and French, won in the schools of Switzerland. His father became an elder in the Second Reformed Church in Tiffin, and loyally supported the cause of Christ in the community. He was a skillful wood-carver, and made all the emblems for the new church when the present house of worship was built. The son, after having served the Reformed Church in two German-English parishes, in one of which, Berne, Indiana, he built a beautiful church, was called to the superintendency of the Orphans' Home in Ft. Wayne, and with the help of his noble companion, his wife, managed the affairs

of that institution with eminent and unusual success for many years. The two oldest daughters married ministers, and the youngest of them, a graduate of Heidelberg University, is the wife of a teacher by profession. One of the sons, also a graduate of Heidelberg University, and of the Central Theological Seminary in Dayton, is at present a successful pastor in Ohio. It was worth while going to Canton to find the Rev. Berchtold Ruf and his family.

"During the earlier part of the pastorate of Rev. J. B. Rust, prominent members of the "Law and Order League" called to see him and invited him to speak at one of their early spring meetings in the City Hall in defense of Sabbath observance in the summer months. The travel to Meyer's and Congress Lakes seriously affected church attendance and interrupted the growth of true Christian life in Canton. He counselled with his friend and neighbor, Mr. George Deuble, the organist of the church, and a son-in-law of Father Herbruck, who advised the minister to attend the meeting, but admonished him to be prudent. The address before the "Law and Order League," in which the open Sunday saloon was named as one of the chief causes of Sabbath desecration, aroused great excitement and animosity in the congregation, with which about twenty saloon-keepers were connected. A spy who had been present at the Law and Order meeting, in his enthusiastic attachment to the cause of "personal liberty," exaggerated the conservative attitude, at that juncture, of the Reformed pastor, who ere long discovered that the Prohibitionists in the League were also displeased with him, because he had not been radical enough for them in denouncing the liquor traffic. Mr. T.—, a member of the consistory at that time, probably by unintentional misrepresentation, called forth a storm of protest in the congregation, and made a rather drastic word-attack upon the pastor himself. The women of the church, however, loyally supported the minister and justified and defended his action. Two weeks later he preached a sermon on law and order, and in honor of the Lord's Day, to a congregation that filled every available seat in the church and numbered not less than nine

hundred or a thousand people. The courageous presentation of the truth, on the basis of Holy Scripture, allayed the storm, silenced the objectors, converted blind and angry opposition into sense and reason, and ushered in the dawn of a better era in the congregation in relation to consistent Christian conduct. Like the Battle of Blenheim: 'It was a famous victory.'

"Religious service in the English language on every Sunday evening was introduced without delay soon after the opening of the new pastorate. This forward step was taken without friction or misgiving, because all the members of the congregation fully realized the need of it in order that the young people, who preferred the English, might be given a more potent reason to show their continued loyalty to the church.

"The temporary impairment of his health, which made it impossible for him to attend properly to the duties of so large a congregation, numbering seven hundred and fifty (750) communicants at that time, and about four hundred (400) pupils and teachers in the Sunday school, led the pastor, Rev. J. B. Rust, to hand in his resignation on July 14, 1889, with heart-felt regret. This important step was unavoidable in the Providence of God. In the month of September, 1889, he quietly withdrew from the field, and for one whole year retired from active parish work and responsibility, until, called to the Reformed Church in New Philadelphia in the Autumn of 1890, as the successor of the late Rev. O. J. Accola, D.D. This closes the account, in the main, of the transitional pastorate of the Rev. J. B. Rust, Ph.D., in Canton, Ohio, the third pastor in the history of Jerusalem's Reformed Congregation."

Rev. Rust remained in New Philadelphia eight years. During that time the congregation erected a beautiful and spacious church which is a credit both to the congregation and the community.

After a further brief pastorate of one and one-half years of the Robertsville charge, Rev. Rust resigned, and removed to Tiffin in 1899 where he has lived ever since. During this period he has served the Bascom charge in Seneca County for

nine years, and then became "delegated pastor" of the Findlay congregation.

Dr. Rust has been a frequent contributor on historical and theological subjects to the "Christian World," the "Reformed Church Messenger," and the "Reformed Church Review." He is the author of a three-hundred and fifty page book entitled "Modernism and the Reformation," published in 1914, and "The Life and Labors of Dr. Herman Rust," published in 1916. He has also delivered series of lectures in Heidelberg College on "Comparative Religion" and "The History of Music."

As pastor of the Canton charge, Rev. Rust was confronted by a series of difficult and ugly questions and problems which were handled with peculiar ability and fearlessness. His name is held in grateful remembrance by a large number of members who are still faithful adherents of the Canton Reformed Church.







REV. FREDERICK STRASSNER, D. D.



MRS. F. STRASSNER

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE LIFE AND PASTORATE OF REV. FREDERICK STRASSNER, D.D.

SIX weeks after the close of Rev. Rust's pastorate, the congregation extended a call to Rev. Frederick Strassner, D.D., then serving the Christ Reformed Church in Orrville. A salary of \$1000 a year was promised him, but as the parsonage had not yet been erected, the pastor had also to pay the rent out of this.

On January 1, 1890, the new minister was installed. He was a man ripe in experience and service, who could look back upon more than thirty years of successful pastoral activity. Before presenting the chief events of his Canton pastorate, a brief sketch of his previous life and work will be given. A few years before his death, Dr. Strassner wrote a rather full account of his early life, intended for his children. This account was placed at the disposal of the writer, and will be freely used. The facts and quotations that follow are all taken from this narrative.

Rev. Frederick Strassner was born on February 22, 1831, in the city of Bremen in Germany, of pious Reformed ancestry.

He was the thirteenth child in a family of fifteen. Of his mother he declared, "She was always happy. The prayers she taught us children were not in vain. Well do I remember them yet, they were the means of leading me nearer to God." He attended the parochial school of his native city, was confirmed at the age of fourteen, and became an apprentice to a fresco painter.

When seventeen years of age a severe attack of ague which would not yield to medical application, took hold of him. A change of climate was recommended. A married sister and brother had emigrated to America and urged the parents to send him too. Accordingly in 1848, he started for America in a sailing vessel, as all the friends and relatives agreed that this

was much safer than taking a steamship, because only so could he "avoid the danger of fire on the ocean."

The English vessel on which he embarked required sixty days to make the trip to New Orleans, and young Strassner being an apt student, spent much of his time in acquiring a working knowledge of English. One of the ship's crew, an Irishman, took much interest in the youth and acted as his teacher. The consequence was that his early English had a very decided Irish brogue.

His fellow passengers "were mostly fugitives who had participated in the revolution of 1848 and were happy to have escaped the clutches of the German government. They gave vent to their joy by singing and dancing." The journey was uneventful with the exception of a near-tragedy; for one day "the vessel ran between two great rocks hidden from the surface. The shock and grinding noise were very perceptible. There was a great commotion and the faces were blanched. Prayer books were in great demand and the knees were bent." However, the boat got off safely, having sustained but slight injury, and favored by calm weather the journey continued to its destination. After their fright, however, "there was no more dancing or foolish talking and jesting, and all were anxious to land on solid ground." After landing at New Orleans a further journey of six days up the Mississippi River was required to reach St. Louis, where his sister lived.

The next years were spent in working at the carpenter's trade and acquiring a better knowledge of English. From St. Louis, young Strassner then went to Cincinnati and there, to his great joy, found a little Reformed mission whose pastor was Rev. Herman Rust, who influenced young Strassner to give himself to the work of the ministry. Rev. Herman Rust was the father of the Rev'd J. B. Rust, who later became successor to Rev. Herbruck as pastor of the Canton church. Of his experiences in Cincinnati, Rev. Strassner says, "I had now found a church-home and entered heart and soul into spiritual labor. Later I was overcome by the Holy Spirit and my conviction was plain that I must enter the ministry. My mind

was so much engaged in this new revelation that I was hindered in my daily occupation."

He yielded to this revelation and determined to prepare for the ministry. Largely by his own efforts he worked his way through Franklin and Marshall College at Lancaster, Pa., and later entered the theological seminary at Mercersburg, Pa.\* While studying at Mercersburg he also acted as assistant to Rev. Geo. Wolff, D.D., pastor of the Paradise charge. One experience during this time made a deep impression upon the young theological student, for he describes it in full: "Dr. Wolff asked me one day to ride his big black horse, a frisky animal. I had no experience with horses; but took my first lesson. A woman with a big clothes basket was met on the road, and the horse would not pass. In the struggle, the saddle turned and I hung on the side, holding the reins while the horse was running full speed. So I jumped in front of the horse to stop him. He jumped over me, taking off part of my coat-tail. In due time, however, I returned the horse."

After completing his course of study at Mercersburg, he was licensed by Susquehanna Classis in 1859, and immediately began missionary work in Lucern County. From Wilkes-Barre as a center he served a number of congregations in the famous Wyoming Valley.† Five years were spent with much success in this pioneer work. At first the young theologian attempted to cook his own meals or "board around." This proved thoroughly unsatisfactory, and he decided to found a home of his own. His heart had already chosen, but his courage was small. "Then I appealed to her pastor. The answer was favorable." A most happy marriage speedily followed.

After leaving Wilkes-Barre, Rev. Strassner served the following charges in Ohio: Berwick, three years; Lancaster, two years; Union charge near Lancaster, three years; Orr-

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\* Mercersburg Theological Seminary was removed to Lancaster, Pa., in 1871 and is now known as the Lancaster or Eastern Theological Seminary.

† Wilkes-Barre was also the first field of labor of Rev. Theodore P. Bolliger, who spent nearly five years there.



ville, eighteen years; Canton, First Church, six years; Canton, Grace Church, ten years.

During the six years' pastorate of Rev. Strassner, the First Church made a number of very decided advances.

The first work undertaken was the building of a parsonage. The Strassner family moved from Orrville in March, and on April 25 ground was broken for the parsonage. The building committee consisted of Rev. Strassner, Jacob Schwingle and John Class. The contract was let for \$1939. The congregation raised by subscriptions \$480, the Ladies' Aid Society promised \$100, in addition, and \$1500 had to be borrowed. The house was ready for occupancy by the end of September. The entire cost of the building including levelling off of the ground, walks, sewer, etc., was \$2002.

The second important work was the revising of the roll of members. As has been stated in previous chapters it had been the custom of Father Herbruck to carry the church-roll around "in his head"; but this was of no help to his successor. Rev. Rust aided by the consistory at once began the task of putting those who claimed membership on record. So many of these nominal members refused to perform the most elementary duties of church members, that the work of sifting the chaff from the wheat had to be faithfully taken up. This work had already begun under Rev. Rust, and was carried to completion by Rev. Strassner. Fifteen months after his pastorate began, the number had been reduced from 743 nominal members to 436 actual members. From these statistics it would appear that the sifting out process was vigorously and zealously carried through.

Third. A Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor was organized June 1, 1890. This was one of the earliest societies in the Reformed Church in Ohio. It gave invaluable training to a host of the young people of the church, and has aided in developing some of the most active workers that the congregation has had. In 1894, a Junior Society was also organized and gathered in about sixty of the Juniors. The organization of these societies so long ago by Rev. Strassner

speaks very highly for his spiritual vision and understanding of the needs of the young people under his pastoral care.

Fourth. The Reformed Church Hymnal was introduced in 1893, and was ordered to be used in all the worship of the congregation. The Hymnal superseded various collections of Gospel songs and ditties that had been in use at the English services.

Fifth. The work of the consistory was made more effective by the organization of committees to which were entrusted specific phases of congregational activities. The principal committees created under this plan were: Membership, Sick and Charity, Music, Sunday School, Prayer Meeting, Offerings, and Ushers.

The death of Mrs. M. A. Behmer, which occurred on Easter morning, April 14, 1895, should also be recorded as one of the noteworthy events of Rev. Strassner's pastorate; for this aged mother in Israel, whose life was full of faith and good works, is the only member of the congregation who has ever left a legacy of which the church was the beneficiary. She gave \$1975 to the local church and \$2000 to various institutions and benevolences of the denomination. May her noble example stimulate to imitation!

The last year of Rev. Strassner's pastorate was filled with trying experiences. A certain portion of the congregation was becoming dissatisfied and did not hide their sentiments; several members elected into the consistory refused to serve; many requests to be dismissed to the Trinity Reformed Church were made. The consistory and pastor both finally realized that a continued successful ministry was not to be expected, and therefore they accepted the pastor's resignation on January 5, 1896. Rev. Strassner continued his labors until after Easter of that year so that the youth under instructions might yet be confirmed. The pastorate terminated on May 1.

In spite of this troubled ending, Rev. Strassner's pastorate as a whole must be accounted as largely blessed and successful. Two hundred and nineteen members were added to the Church by confirmation alone. The Sunday School enroll-

ment increased from 300 to 480. The gifts for benevolence grew from an annual average of \$107 during the previous pastorate to an average of \$197, not counting the large individual gift of Mrs. Behmer in figuring this average but only the normal congregational offerings. The average annual contributions for congregational purposes increased from \$1536 to \$2559. One of the reasons alleged for dissatisfaction with the pastor was that he preached too many "financial sermons," and urged the "grace of giving" too insistently. A comparison of the number of members with their gifts will prove that only heroic methods could possibly have answered. The marked musical ability of Rev. Strassner's sons and daughters, which was freely contributed, also added in no small degree to the success of the pastorate.

After closing his labors with the First Church, Rev. Strassner immediately began preaching in the old United Brethren Church\* on Thirteenth Street, S.E. St. John's Classis gave permission to organize a new congregation at the annual meeting held May 12-14, with the proviso, however, that "The congregation to be founded must be located at a distance of not less than a mile from the First Church, and must not interfere with said Church." Under this authorization, a mission was organized in March, 1897. The mission prospered, and in about two years decided to secure a church-home of its own. Lots were bought at the corner of Market Street and Thirteenth S. E., and a neat little church was erected. The church and lots cost \$5000, of which amount \$3000 had been secured by the day of dedication. The church was dedicated on December 3, 1899. Rev. F. C. Nau and Rev. F. Mayer, D.D., of Youngstown, delivered the dedicatory sermons. At this service, Dr. Strassner said, "Three years ago we did not have a Bible and now we have a church of our own. Our children can eat of the fruit of the tree we have planted, and only the future will reveal the good that will be brought forth."

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\* This church is now used by the St. Paul's African Methodist Episcopal congregation as their place of worship.



GRACE REFORMED CHURCH  
*South Market Street and Thirteenth*





At first the new church was known as the South Market Street Reformed Church ; later the name was changed to Grace Reformed Church.

Dr. Strassner continued his labors until 1906. The church was improved and paid for, and the membership increased to over one hundred. After preaching more than half a century, he retired from the active ministry and spent his last years with his children. During the last months of his life, he was very feeble and helpless. The Lord called his faithful servant home on June 24, 1911.

During a large part of his ministry Dr. Strassner was also active with his pen, contributing frequently to the Church papers and periodicals. He also edited a parish paper for a number of years, while pastor of the Orrville charge. In 1873 he issued a little book of "Devotions for children." From this book of prayers two brief extracts will be given. The first is a morning prayer to be used "when entering on the duties of the day."

"O Lord, let the Spirit of Jesus abide in me that I may work while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. Help me to fear Thee and keep Thy commandments ; to watch and pray that I enter not into temptation ; O gracious God, the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Defend me by Thy power ; guard me against sin and error ; and so order the events of this day, and so sanctify my thoughts and deeds that they may promote Thy glory, and the welfare of my fellow men, through Jesus Christ, my Saviour."

The second extract is a part of the prayer for Sunday evening: "Forgive, I entreat Thee, O heavenly Father, all my sins and shortcomings of this day, the coldness of my devotions, the dullness of my prayers, the distractions of my thoughts. Write Thy law in my heart, and enable me to show by a holy, unblamable and useful life, that I have not enjoyed Thy Sabbaths in vain. Thus prepare me more and more for the enjoyment of the eternal Sabbath which knows no setting sun." Amen.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE PASTORATE OF REV. FREDERICK C. NAU

REV. Frederick C. Nau and the writer were classmates for four years at Calvin College, Cleveland, Ohio, graduating together in 1893, and have maintained a close friendship through the years. Rev. Nau, therefore, very willingly consented to describe the events of his own pastorate for this history. The story will be given in his own words, without any changes, except the insertion of some additional matter which will be included in brackets in the body of the text.

Rev. F. C. Nau was born in Columbus, Ohio, December 2, 1871, where his father was principal of the German High School. His education was begun under the guidance of his father, and continued in the public schools at Mt. Eaton, Galion, and New Bavaria, in Ohio, where his father, who had given up his career as pedagogue, had been serving the Reformed congregations. Of his experiences as a youth at New Bavaria, Rev. Nau writes in a serio-comic vein as follows: "I, the oldest son, was hostler, woodchopper and manager of about two acres of Henry County muckland. My chief ambition was to excell as a corn-cutter and husker. I always earned one dollar per day and board, for threshing, binding wheat, carrying sheaves, cutting or husking corn in that primitive land. I attended country school, walking to school through the woods in deep snow, and slush or mud, for one and one-half miles each morning. I was janitor of the school one whole winter. I opened the schoolhouse, built the wood-fire, swept the schoolroom every day, and received the princely sum of five cents a day. I was the most energetic kid in that section. I could lick anything that came along; that is, anything within size and reason."

"One Saturday evening, August, 1887, when I, the ebullient youth, returned home from the cornfield, my father put the quietus on my rural and pugilistic proclivities by solemnly



REV. FREDERICK C. NAU



announcing to me that he and mother had decreed, that the next week I should go to Calvin College. I started out with a new trunk and a suit that cost seven dollars. My career there was uneventful."

After a year spent in Calvin College, Mr. Nau interrupted his college work to teach a district-school in Henry County during the winter (1888-9). That fall he was glad to go back to college again, and graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Arts, in June, 1893. During his college career he gave evidence of possessing exceptional intellectual abilities, and excelled especially as a speaker and debater. In the fall of 1893, he entered the Heidelberg Theological Seminary at Tiffin, Ohio, taking the full course and graduating in May, 1896. The subsequent events we will let Rev. Nau describe in his own words.

"In the summer of 1896, Frederick C. Nau had just completed his theological studies at Heidelberg Seminary, Tiffin, Ohio, when the Jerusalem's German Reformed Church of Canton, O., which had become vacant through the resignation of the Rev'd Frederick Strassner, D.D., wrote to Tiffin, requesting Dr. John H. Peters, President of the University, to recommend as a temporary supply a student, who could preach both German and English. Dr. Peters referred the consistory to Frederick C. Nau, who had graduated from the Seminary a few weeks before, had been licensed to preach by Erie Classis at its last meeting, held on Kelley's Island, and who was still residing at Tiffin. He supplied the pulpit for three Sundays, when he was nominated by the consistory, and at an election, held on Sunday morning, June 21, 1896, was unanimously chosen by the congregation to be its pastor. He accepted the call sent him, and arrangements were at once made by St. John's Classis for his ordination and installation. A special meeting of Classis was called and held in the old frame school house of this church, on the afternoon of the last Thursday in July. The call to the new pastor was approved, he was received into Classis and a committee, consisting of Rev. A. G. Lohmann, Rev. John H. Rust, D.D., and Rev. John H. Beck, was appointed to ordain and install him at a service to be held in the



church that same evening. Rev. Lohmann preached the sermon and the other members of the committee conducted the ordination and installation services. Prayer was offered by Rev. Henry Nau, father of the newly-elected pastor.

"This new pastorate began most auspiciously.\* The people were united and manifested a will to work.

"In September of 1896, the pastor was united in marriage with Miss Engelina C. Cantieny, of Lima, O. Mrs. Nau became an earnest worker in the church, being active in the Sunday School, in Christian Endeavor, and the Missionary Society. She organized and taught a large young ladies' Bible Class. [Two daughters were born to Rev. and Mrs. Nau while in Canton, namely Catherine Lodwina and Dorothea.]

"Early in 1897, the question of building an addition to the church, for Sunday School purposes, was considered, and the consistory was authorized by the congregation to begin the raising of a building fund. To enable the church to borrow needed moneys to carry forward the building operations, action was taken to have the church legally incorporated. This was done, June 30, 1897, and the old name 'Jerusalem's German Reformed Church' was changed to 'The First German Reformed Church of Canton, Ohio.'

"On the 17th of April, 1898, the congregation voted to build a large addition to the west side of the church. On July 27, the contracts were let. Mr. George Whike received the contract for general construction, Mr. Martin Weiler for the stone work, and Mr. L. B. Hartung for heating and lighting. [The building committee originally appointed consisted of Phil. Weber, Chas. Seeman, Carl Spanagel, Henry Rupp, Jacob Schwingel, Martin Weiler, and L. B. Hartung. A few weeks later the committee was enlarged so as to include the entire consistory and the trustees. Chas. Seeman was made chairman and Phil. H. Weber, the secretary of the complete committee.]

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\* The first sermons which Rev. Nau preached in Canton were on the following texts: for the German sermon, John 10: 9; for the English, Matth. 6: 33.

"During the course of construction of the new building, services were held in the old Narwold Candy factory on Mahoning Street, which had become vacant shortly before this time, and was generously offered to the congregation, by the Narwold brothers, for the holding of services until the completion of the new building.

"The new building was completed and dedicated in January, 1899. The dedicatory services were held on Sunday, January 22. [The Church was beautifully decorated for the event. The pulpit platform was almost hidden by palms, lilies and other plants. At the rear suspended from the walls were two large flags of our country.]

"The German sermon was preached in the morning, by Dr. H. J. Ruetenik, of Cleveland, president of Calvin College, and the English sermon, in the evening, by Dr. John H. Prugh, of Grace Reformed Church of Pittsburgh, Pa. [Dr. Ruetenik chose for his subject, 'The Foundation of the Church'; Dr. Prugh, 'The Mission of the Church.'] Rev. S. E. Neikirk, of Wooster, Ohio, made the appeal for special contributions. These amounted to about \$1300 for the day. There was a fellowship meeting in the afternoon, when a number of city pastors brought greetings from their congregations. The cost of the new building, including the carpeting and frescoing of the old church, the furnishing of the basement later, and the numerous other improvements, amounted to about \$18,000. [The entire cost of the new building alone was about \$12,000; the remainder was expended for extensive repairs on the old building and the items given above. A debt of \$5000.00 remained on the day of dedication. The Sunday School room and the church auditorium at that time were separated by great rolling doors; but these persistently refused to work satisfactorily and had to be torn out a few years later. The basement was fitted up only as a social and dining hall, and was not arranged for Sunday School purposes until 1905.]

"The fine memorial windows were placed in the church at this time by the Frauenverein and some of the families of the congregation. [These were presented as follows: North side,

by Mr. and Mrs. John Obergefell; east side, by Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Arnold, Mrs. Anna Behmer, Frauenverein, memory of Rebecca Rupp; south side, Mr. and Mrs. Dan Paar, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Schwingel, Mrs. Mary Ohliger, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Hexamer.]

"All of these changes proved of benefit to the congregation. The results justified the expenditure of the moneys. The appearance of the new church was a marked improvement over the old. The fronts of the two buildings were matched, and the west plot of ground, occupied only by the little frame school house was covered by a fine brick structure. The new building was planned chiefly for work. The fifteen classrooms and the entire arrangement, made for more effective teaching and greater efficiency in general. The present large, flourishing Sunday School is due largely to two factors: the modern Sunday School building and equipment, and the selection of a young man (William Daberko) for superintendent, who possesses marked talents and qualifications for this work. He knows how to co-operate with pastor and consistory; how to select competent teachers and work with them, how to organize and inspire the school and make wise use of the material equipment at hand.

[A few weeks after the dedication of the remodelled building certain aggravating defects began to disclose themselves. The roof persisted in leaking and staining the new frescoing; the rolling doors between the two auditoriums showed a pernicious habit of bulging and balking at most inopportune moments, the pews stuck to the worshipers and refused to let go, and the heating plant did not behave as a church institution ought. This all required extra exertion and expense for the consistory.]

"The old frame school house, which for twenty years under Dr. Peter Herbruck's pastorate, had served the purposes of a German parochial school, was sold for \$100, and removed from the church grounds. Before the erection of the new Sunday School structure, this schoolhouse was used by the

Primary Department of the Sunday School, and for the usual social and business meetings of the church.

[On June 4, 1899, the congregation deeded to the city of Canton, a strip of land six feet wide, running the entire length of the lot on the west side, to be used only for sidewalk purposes, provided the city bear all the expenses connected with the laying of the walk and completing the improvements contemplated.]

"In the year 1900, the large churchyard back of the church which had been a cemetery from the earliest times of the congregation's history, was graded and terraced. This was made necessary by an unfortunate occurrence. When the contractor began work on the new basement, he instructed his men to dump the excavated ground on the church yard. The old grave stones were laid flat on the graves and the whole cemetery was covered with the new ground about three feet deep. This was done without instructions from the consistory and while the pastor was absent from the city. It was all done so suddenly and speedily, that there was no chance to prevent it. It was a disappointment to the people, and the only way of making even partial reparation, was by grading and terracing the grounds. The old tomb-stone of the Rev. Benjamin Faust, the predecessor of Dr. Herbruck, because of its historic value, ought to be dug up and erected again at some future day. It lies immediately back of the rear door of the Sunday School. [The body of Rev. Benj. Faust, however, had been removed many years before and only the stone was left to mark the former site of the grave.]

"The growing work of the church at this time suggested the idea of increasing the number of members of the consistory. This was done at a congregational meeting, held December 28, 1900, when the number was increased from twelve to eighteen.

"For some time there was a desire prevalent among the younger women of the church for a second woman's organization. The 'Frauenverein' was large and flourishing and doing a splendid work, but there were many younger women in the



congregation, who were not affiliated with this society. This fact prompted the organization of the 'Woman's Missionary Society.' The pastor invited those who favored a missionary society to meet on a Sunday afternoon of January, 1902. Seventeen came out for the meeting, which was held in the Primary room of the Sunday School, and after a brief discussion, an organization was effected. This was the first English Woman's Missionary Society of Central Synod.

"During this year (1902) the question of installing the Individual Communion Service came up for consideration. There were arguments pro and con. Many of the devout German members could not conscientiously vote for the new way. It was therefore decided to use both services, the old historic service with the common cup, in the morning of communion Sunday, and the individual cups in the evening. This arrangement gave general satisfaction.

"In the year 1906 the new organ was purchased. Andrew Carnegie gave \$1500, one-half of the cost. The heirs of Elder Henry Rupp contributed \$1000 out of his estate, and the congregation raised \$500. This organ constantly reminds the congregation of one of its most devoted and faithful members, Elder Henry Rupp. His death occurred on Sunday morning, January 15, 1905, shortly after he had partaken of the Lord's Supper. He was hastening up the hill, at the public square, to get the Canton-Akron interurban car to take him to his home along the New Berlin road when he suddenly fell to the sidewalk. He was carried into a near by store in an unconscious state. When the pastor arrived a few minutes later, he was shocked to see the beloved elder dead. He passed away with the joy and peace of the Holy Communion in his heart. As Mr. Rupp was a widower and without children, the only heirs being his brother John and his two sisters, they were asked to give \$1000 toward the new pipe organ, which they very willingly did. The organ is therefore called 'The Rupp Memorial Organ.' At the dedicatory services held on Sunday, January 26, 1906, the morning sermon was preached by Rev. John H. Bosch, of Ft. Wayne, Ind., and the evening



sermon by Rev. S. E. Neikirk of Wooster. [Rev. Bosch preached on Psalm 150, and Rev. Neikirk chose Rev. 5: 9, 'And they sung a new song.'] This new instrument was greatly needed. The old tracker-action organ was small and after forty years of constant service was quite well worn out. The new organ has two manuals, tubular-pneumatic action, twenty-two speaking stops and 1200 pipes. At the beginning of Rev. Nau's pastorate, Mr. L. A. Clewell, who had been the efficient and faithful organist for many years, resigned. Mr. Harry Ballard became his successor and served throughout this pastorate and far into the next.

[In the fall of 1904 the Sunday School offered to complete the basement and fit it up for Sunday School purposes, and pay all the expenses. The congregation gladly gave its permission and the work was completed during 1905 at a total expense of \$1648. The primary department of the Sunday School was then assigned to the new rooms, which relieved the congested condition upstairs that had greatly handicapped the growth of the school. In the course of three years the Sunday School paid off the entire expense of this improvement.]

"During the year 1906, the last payment on the debt incurred by the building of the Sunday-School addition was made and the church was free at last. But another small debt was incurred immediately after the liquidation of the mortgage indebtedness. The church needed to be frescoed again and other improvements made. The cost of these improvements amounted to \$1276.

"The language question was discussed frequently, frankly and seriously in this congregation for many years. This is the one difficult problem to solve in a German-English church. It must be said, to the credit of the people of The First German Reformed Church, that at no time did they allow the German-English question to cause serious dissensions among the people. The membership wanted that arrangement of the two languages, which would be for the general welfare of the whole congregation, and whenever a vote had been taken the minority, in the true American spirit always yielded to the majority

vote. The Sunday School and evening services were made English during the two preceding pastorates. In 1907, by a vote of 270 to 116, taken on Sunday morning, July 6, it was decided to hold English morning services every alternate Sunday. This vote was taken shortly after Rev. Nau had resigned and was preparing to leave for a new field of labor.

"Having for some time had a desire to go East, and having within a year, received two calls from the eastern section of our Church, one from the First Reformed Church of Lebanon, Pa., and another from St. Mark's Church of Easton, Pa., Rev. Nau decided to accept the call from Easton. Accordingly he presented his resignation to this congregation on Sunday morning, June 6, 1907, just eleven years after preaching his first sermon in Canton. He closed his pastorate the last Sunday in July, and preached his initial sermon in Easton the first Sunday in August, 1907.

"During this period of eleven years the membership of the congregation increased from 524 to over 1000. There were 444 baptisms, 405 confirmations, and over 400 accessions by certificate and reprofession of faith. Did they all remain true to their church? Alas, not all! The sad fact remains in our modern churches, that so many of those who unite with the churches do not continue faithful to the end. But it has always been so. It is not easy to keep the faith and conserve the spiritual life.

"The one who had the honor of serving this congregation for eleven years, can never forget what this church did for him. It gave him his first opportunity in the Christian ministry. It dealt with him most kindly and generously throughout his pastorate. He will always hold the dear old church of Canton in grateful remembrance. Every hour of the day he is reminded of the old friends by the gold watch he carries in his pocket, which is a beautiful Christmas gift from this congregation. It is now a good many years old, but it is just as bright and true, as it was on that hallowed Christmas night, when it was presented to him."

[Since leaving Canton, Rev. Nau has served St. Mark's Church, Easton, Pa., for two years, and St. Mark's, Reading, Pa., for seven years. Since June, 1916, he is serving Grace Church, Pittsburgh.

Wherever he has served the membership of his congregations has very materially increased, and he has made for himself an enviable reputation as a clear and forceful speaker with a helpful and inspiring message.

In the First Reformed Church in Canton, a large circle of sincere friends holds his name in grateful remembrance.

Rev. Nau has also served the church at large by acting as president of Reading Classis, member of the Sunday School Board of General Synod, and delegate to General Synod. He has also contributed occasional articles to the church papers, the Reformed Church Review and other periodicals.]

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE CONSTITUTION AND THE INCORPORATION

IN 1810 when the Reformed and the Lutheran congregations decided to begin the erection of a little chapel on the site which Bezaleel Wells had dedicated "for a house of worship," they adopted certain agreements which were to regulate their mutual relations. Twelve years later when a new site was about to be purchased the two congregations adopted "Articles of Union and Agreement," which were to regulate all matters concerning the joint ownership of the property and the rights of each congregation. During this period the two congregations had one church record in common. Unfortunately this book, which contained the invaluable account of the beginnings of the congregations and these "Articles of Union and Agreement," has been lost. A most diligent search in the records and archives of the Stark County Courthouse also failed to discover any trace of them.

Isolated references to these "agreements" which are found in the history of our congregation, disclose that they contained several most interesting features which should be emphasized. Thus, the members of each congregation had the right to vote for the officers of the other congregation also; and in the calling of a new minister by either congregation, the members of both were allowed to vote. Furthermore, the pastor of each congregation regularly gave catechetical instruction to the youth of both congregations together, at such times when the other pastor was serving in some other section of the vast parish, which was being served in common. On the days of confirmation either pastor would confirm the catechumens as "Reformed," or "Lutherans" according to their preference.

During the "new measure" excitement (1838-1846) the two congregations began to draw apart. The denominational distinctions were still more emphasized after 1846, when, as a consequence of the adoption of a new constitution by the Ohio

Synod, Rev. Peter Herbruck worked out a distinctly Reformed constitution for the Canton congregation. He introduced, however, a number of unique articles which have been retained to the present time, although the constitution has been several times revised and frequently amended. A careful reading will disclose these odd features without further comment.

The last revision occurred in 1897, when the congregation was incorporated under the laws of the state of Ohio. At that time the name and nature of the church was legally changed by the adoption of the following resolution, "Resolved, that this congregation be changed from an association under the name of the First German Reformed Jerusalem's Church, to a corporation under the name of, The First German Reformed Church of Canton, Ohio; and that all the rights, title and interests in and to, any and all, real and personal property which it now owns, pass to and vest in the church under the new incorporated name, and that the title to the real estate be legally transferred by the trustees of the association to the newly elected trustees of the corporation."

The constitution as revised and adopted in 1897 will here be given in a free translation from the German. Later amendments will be indicated in brackets.

#### THE CONSTITUTION AND CHURCH RULES OF THE FIRST GERMAN REFORMED CHURCH, CANTON, OHIO.

As it is a commonly accepted proposition that no social organization or union of individuals for attaining a common goal, can exist without order and laws, we, the undersigned members of the First German Reformed Church, here in Canton, Stark County, in the State of Ohio, have found ourselves persuaded to draw up the following Constitution and Church Rules; and obligate ourselves by our own signature to precisely follow and support the same.

#### ARTICLE I.

The First German Reformed Church in Canton recognizes no other foundation for its faith and life than the Gospel of



our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, as it is contained in the Holy Scriptures.

#### ARTICLE II.—THE CONSISTORY.

1. For managing the affairs of the church a mass meeting of all the members of the church shall be held on the first Sunday of each year, [amended as follows: "On a Sunday in December"] on which occasion a consistory shall be elected by ballot, consisting of four elders, eight deacons, [amended December 1900 to read: "Six elders and twelve deacons"] and three trustees. [When the new constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States went into effect in 1908, this article was interpreted in accordance with Article 9 of the general constitution of the church, and the consistory was declared to constitute the board of trustees of the congregation.]

2. The day of the election shall be announced each year by the minister of the congregation, fourteen days before the day determined upon for the election.

3. It shall herewith be perpetually established that the minister of the congregation is and remains a member of the congregation without interruption, so long as he serves in his official capacity; he shall also, whenever present, be chairman at every meeting of the consistory.

4. Whenever a member of the consistory dies or moves away, the vacant office shall be filled at a special, general election, which is to be announced, fourteen days before, to the congregation by the minister.

#### ARTICLE III.—THE DUTIES OF THE CONSISTORY.

##### *A. The Duties of the Preacher.*

1. It shall be the duty of the preacher to preach the Gospel pure, unadulterated, and free from human additions or arbitrary perversions; and to administer the holy sacraments; wherein, at the sacrament of the Holy Supper, he is to adhere strictly to the directions as given in I Cor. 11: 23-29.

2. It shall be the duty of the preacher to prepare the youth and the adults for reception into the church and partaking of

the Holy Supper, by instructing them in the essential truths of the salvation of the Christian religion. He shall also visit the sick and constantly labor to the end that the members of the church shall lead a Christian life.

3. The preacher shall go before his congregation in a truly Christian manner of life. If he should cause offense, or—which God may prevent—be guilty of gross sin or vice, he shall be warned and admonished by the other members of the consistory in a brotherly manner; and if he gives no heed, and incorrigibly becomes a stumbling-block and offense to the church, the consistory has the right to accuse the preacher before the Classis to which he belongs, and to deny him all official duties in the congregation until the matter has been definitely decided by the Classis or the Synod.

4. Furthermore it shall be left to the preacher without restraint, to conduct a Christian devotional hour, on some evening of each week, in no other way, however, except that the preacher begins the devotional hour with singing and prayer, and then reads and explains [in the constitution as originally adopted the words “Hermeneutically and exegetically” followed here] a chapter from the Old or New Testament. In case it is impossible for the minister to conduct the devotional hour himself, it is permissible for any member of the congregation having the ability to conduct the same.

#### *B. The Duties of Trustees.\**

1. They shall seek by the grace of God to preside over their own home and also the congregation, and go before them in the way of a Christian deportment.

2. They shall see to it that the property of the congregation shall be secured against loss and injury, and the buildings be kept in good condition.

3. That deeds and other important documents belonging to the congregation are safely preserved.

4. That all debts which may exist, are reduced and cancelled in the manner most advantageous for the congregation.

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\* The entire consistory now constitutes the Board of Trustees.

*C. Duties of Elders.*

1. They are to go before the congregation with a Christian deportment.

2. They are to see to it that evangelical doctrine, and Christian discipline in the congregation are maintained and continued.

3. To visit the school on occasions and make provision that good order is observed therein, and the children are rightly instructed.

4. Should quarrels and disagreements exist in the congregation, they shall seek as much as possible to reconcile the quarreling factions in order to restore peace.

5. When the preacher requests it, they shall go with him to visit the sick.

6. They shall see to it that the account of all expenditures and receipts of the congregation are correctly kept, and finally, aid in carrying out all further measures for advancing the welfare of the congregation.

*D. The Duties of Deacons.*

1. They shall go before the congregation with a pious example.

2. At public and private services and in particular at the distribution of the Lord's Supper they shall extend all necessary assistance.

3. They shall gather the offerings, and keep a record of the same, and hand them over to the treasurer or the financial secretary.

4. They shall see to it that the laborers in the word of God are supported, and provided for, and kept according to the command of Christ; and finally, they shall secure good discipline and order, and promote the same.

## ARTICLE IV.—CONSISTORY MEETING.

1. The consistory shall regularly meet once a month, to consider all matters that will advance the welfare of the congregation.

2. A mere majority of the members of the consistory shall constitute a quorum, which shall be authorized to open the meeting and dispose of the business on hand. [Amended, November 15, 1896 to read, "Seven members of the consistory shall constitute a quorum, and shall be authorized to open a meeting and transact business."]

3. The proceedings of the consistory shall be entered into a record designated for that purpose, and it shall be a stated duty, to announce the most important resolutions to the congregation, on the following Sunday.

#### ARTICLE V.—GENERAL DUTIES OF THE CONSISTORY.

1. It shall be the duty of the consistory to see to it that every member of the congregation leads a Christian life; and in case any member should be guilty of an opposite act, the consistory shall cite him to appear before it; and if the error is proved, the consistory shall admonish him once or several times; if no amendment ensues, the consistory has the right to suspend such a member from partaking of the Lord's Supper until such a time that amendment of life is shown; or even to exclude him from the congregation.

2. Two members of the consistory are empowered to call a meeting of the consistory.

#### ARTICLE VI.—RECEPTION OF CHURCH-MEMBERS.

1. No one shall be confirmed who has not begun or attended the instruction of the minister, unless the minister and the consistory consider that the applicant has a sufficient knowledge of religion, or are satisfied that he is receptive and qualified thereunto.

#### ARTICLE VII.—ARRIVALS.

1. Applicants for membership who cannot present a good recommendation from the congregation from which they have departed, and are entire strangers to the consistory, shall be received only on six-month's probation. If they prove themselves during this period as good members, their names shall be entered upon the roll of the regular church-members.

2. When members of the Protestant-Evangelical church of Europe or other countries come into the local congregation, and abide here permanently, it will be their duty, if they desire to become members of our church, to make application to the consistory or a member thereof; the consistory shall then acquaint such newcomers with our constitution and church laws; if they express a willingness to abide by the church laws thus brought to their attention and to support the same, then their names shall be entered into the church-record, and they shall be considered as members of the congregation. Reception of members shall take place before the assembled congregation.

3. No one can be considered a member of the congregation who does not support the church and minister according to his ability. A neglect of this duty without sufficient cause shall be considered as though such a member had withdrawn from the church of his own accord, and his name shall be erased from the roll of members of the congregation.

#### ARTICLE VIII.—CONCERNING ELECTIONS.

1. No election shall be counted as legal which has not been announced fourteen days beforehand, according to Article II, Section 2.

2. When a minister resigns the congregation, it shall be the duty of the consistory to advertise the vacant charge, and as soon as one or more candidates apply for the position of pastor, the congregation shall vote for one of the candidates recommended by the consistory, on a day announced beforehand; and if the candidate receives a two-thirds majority of all the votes cast by members in good and regular standing, he shall be considered the choice of the whole congregation in view of which a call shall be extended to him.

#### ARTICLE IX.—ITINERANT AND VISITING MINISTERS.

A minister who is a stranger coming into the congregation and desiring to preach in the place of the minister stationed here, must apply to the consistory or a member thereof; and



shall be permitted to preach with the permission of the consistory or the regular minister.

#### ARTICLE X.—CONCERNING THE LANGUAGE.

Both languages shall be used in this congregation. The sermon in the morning shall be in German and in the evening in English. [By a vote of the congregation taken on Sunday, June 30, 1907, this article was changed by a majority of 270 to 116, so as to hold German services only every two weeks in the morning.]

#### ARTICLE XI.—IMPROVEMENTS OF THE CHURCH PROPERTY.

When repairs are necessary on the church or parsonage which shall exceed a cost of \$50.00, the consistory shall call a congregational meeting to consider the matter. No improvements shall be started, however, until sufficient funds are in hand or have been subscribed.

#### ARTICLE XII.—THE GENERAL CONSTITUTION.

All questions which cannot be decided by this constitution, shall be determined according to the general constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States.

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In 1897, the congregation decided to be legally incorporated under the general corporation laws of Ohio as a "corporation not for profit," in order "to provide a place of worship for its members, to be conducted, according to the rules and discipline of the Reformed Church in the United States; to promote the interests of the Christian religion, and to receive and hold donations and bequests and funds arising from other sources for the benefit of said corporation."

The articles of incorporation were filed with the Secretary of State on November 29, 1897, and are recorded in Volume 73, Page 228, of the Records of Incorporation.

## CHAPTER XXII

### REV. THEODORE P. BOLLIGER AND THE FIRST CHURCH

**D**URING July of 1907, Rev. F. C. Nau, who had just resigned the Canton pastorate, wrote to Rev. Theodore P. Bolliger, who was then serving the New Philadelphia church, inviting him to supply the Canton pulpit some Sunday during August. Now it happened that Rev. Bolliger had been granted all of August as his vacation, but that he could not leave New Philadelphia until after the first Sunday of the month, so he promptly informed Rev. Nau that the only Sunday on which he could preach would be the first, and that he was willing to come only with the express understanding that he was not a candidate for the pulpit, and would not consider himself as being placed under any obligation to the congregation, if he preached.

With this understanding Rev. Bolliger spent Sunday, August 4, in Canton. He taught the German class, made a little speech to the Sunday School, preached morning and evening, and talked to the Christian Endeavor Society. In the morning he preached on Luke 19: 41, in the evening on Eph. 3: 14-16. The subjects were, "Die Traenen unsres Heilandes," and "The Christ Dwelling Within." He was received most cordially, but not a word or hint was given that might have been construed as indicating that the sermons were looked upon as "trial sermons." Two days later, Rev. Bolliger went west for a month and gave no further thought to his Canton visit.

During the next weeks the Canton people heard several other ministers, and by the beginning of September, the consistory had come to a decision, for at the meeting held on the third, the following resolution was unanimously passed, "That the committee composed of Brothers Seemann and Daberkow interview Rev. Bolliger and see if he would accept a call from



REV. THEODORE PHILIP BOLLIGER



this church if it were extended to him." This committee met with Rev. Bolliger and very frankly discussed with him certain needs and problems of the Canton church; but had to be content to wait a week before he could give them a definite answer. At the end of that period he consented to have his name go before the congregation as a candidate for the pulpit. The next communication that he received was the official notification that he had been unanimously elected on Sunday, September 29.

On Sunday, November 17, the new pastor conducted his first services. The first services are always of peculiar interest to both pastor and people and many of the members will be glad to be reminded of the themes and the outlines of the first sermons. In the morning the text was Acts 4: 12, "Es ist in keinem Andern Heil, ist auch kein andrer Name den Menschen gegeben, darinnen wir sollen selig werden." The subject was, "Der Weg zur Seligkeit." Erstens, Der Weg der Menschen; zweitens, Der Weg Gottes. In the evening the text was I John 4: 16, "God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God." The subject was, "God is Love." First, the Meaning of these Words; secondly, the Obligations of this Wondrous Truth. These were given as the obligation of confession, of loving others, and of abiding in God. Though the audiences were not large, the new pastor felt like a stranger in a strange land, being gazed upon by the curious natives who were wondering how he would "pan out."

At this point the author somewhat reluctantly must interrupt the story of the Canton pastorate to talk about himself a bit. The previous pastors all had to submit to the embarrassment of furnishing personal details of their lives, and so to be consistent, and not show himself undue favors, it will be necessary for him to go through with it also. For the paragraphs dealing with himself, the author prefers to speak in the first person.

In the little village of Newville, Ind., now known as Vera Cruz, I was born on Friday, the thirteenth of December, 1872. Much of the primitive forest was still standing, the swamps



had not yet been drained, and during the summer everybody had the maleria or the ague. My earliest recollection of apple-butter is that it always had a bit of quinine hidden beneath the surface. We got it during summer as regularly as our meals. My second earliest recollection has to do with the mysterious sounds in the tree tops, and the nuts under the trees. These seemed to lure me on; and one day the lad of four became the most talked-of personage in the village by following the voices into the woods, becoming lost, falling asleep and not being found until many hours later. The next clear recollection has to do with the desire of some day preaching, even as my father did. When nearly six years of age, my father for the sake of our health moved to Kansas. There my boyhood was spent at Hiawatha and New Basel, where I attended the public schools. I learned to read German as early as I learned the English, and a wonderful acquisition it was to me. At New Basil, we lived twelve miles from the nearest railroad, in a community largely of Swiss people, with conditions raw and primitive. Everybody was poor. There were no luxuries and few of the necessities of life. My father had a salary of \$400 a year which frequently was not paid in full, and in addition had a neat parsonage and received all the meat and flour that the household of ten required. Spending money for children was unknown. About twice a year father would give each one of us a nickel. It was often a matter of days until all the various desires of childhood had been weighed and the best purchase decided upon. All about us were the great prairies rolling in unbroken majesty as far as the eye could see. It seemed a wonderful life; it was in fact a life of simplicity and poverty. The country schools were fine for that day. Through slush, mud, snow and Kansas blizzards I tramped one and one-half mile, morning and evening. But the school-term lasted only six months of the year, and I had a keen passion to learn and a voracious appetite to read, while there were but few books in English in my father's library; so, perforce, I literally learned my schoolbooks by heart. Then I turned to father's German books, and took up history, theology, poetry, some of the great

dramas, and even the doctor-book. I shall never forget the tremendous upheaval of soul that Schiller's poems and dramas brought me. Before I was sixteen, I had read and knew intimately more German literary masterpieces than are now taken up in an ordinary college course. The German Bible also passed into my very life's blood. I learned all its precious stories, could repeat hundreds of verses by heart, and knew scores of the old German hymns and songs. My love for German literature, history and genius dates from those years.

During all my boyhood days, I secretly nursed the hope of becoming a minister some day. But during the terrible crop failures of the eighties, and the hardships and sacrifices of those years in the parental home, I despaired of ever being able to go to school; so my mind began to contemplate the question of getting into something in which I could make money. When I was about fourteen years old, Rev. E. V. Gerhart, D.D., president of the Lancaster, Pa. Theological Seminary, attended the dedication of the Reformed Church in Abilene, our countyseat. My father took me with him to pay our respect to the venerable old man. Suddenly Dr. Gerhart turned to me and asked, And are you going to follow in your father's footsteps and also enter the sacred calling of a minister of the Gospel? In my confusion I hesitated a moment, and my father answered: I am afraid not, he wants to get into something in which there is money. The good doctor then spoke to me personally for a few moments on the matter. I do not remember a word he said, but I do know when I left that room, my mind was determined, and my future was settled. About a year later my father told me one day very quietly that he was going to send me to Calvin College, Cleveland, Ohio and inquired whether I had any particular profession for which I wanted to prepare myself. As I look back now, I see that we both had been too reserved towards one another. I had always felt drawn towards the ministry; he had prayed that I might enter this sacred calling; but we never got together until then. So in September, 1888, I started for Cleveland, Ohio.

By heroic sacrifices and endless self-denials, father kept me in college for five years. To this day, I cannot understand how he did it. The tears stand in my eyes as I write of it. If I have been of any use in the Reformed Church it is the love and sacrifice of my dear parents to which much of the credit must go.

Knowing the price which my parents were paying to keep me in school, I determined to give them full value by faithful application. During the five years, I stood at the head of every class, during every month without a break, graduating in June, 1893, as valedictorian. After a year spent in teaching school in Kansas, I entered the Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa., in the fall of 1894, taking the full three years' course. The Biblical languages and church history appealed especially to me. In Hebrew I took first honors. At the graduating services, I represented the New Testament Department by reading a thesis on the subject, "Biblical Theology the Norm of Doctrinal Development." In a class of twenty-seven, with few exceptions graduates of various colleges, I ranked with the three highest for the entire three years.

A few days after graduation, I was licensed by Lancaster Classis at Manheim, Pa., and on June 27, 1897, began my labors in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., as pastor of the St. Luke's Church. On July 25, a committee appointed by Wyoming Classis ordained me to the holy office of the ministry; and the prayers of my parents were answered at last.

The most important event of that year, next to my ordination, was getting married. On November 17, I was united in marriage to Elizabeth Mohr of Burbank, Cal., previously of Haskins, Ohio, and a former student at Calvin College. In the course of the years, four children arrived to gladden the parsonage, namely, Lydia Aurelia, Louise Virgilia, Katherine Marie, and Theodore Karl.

I remained in my first field for four years and four months. During the last year, the Plymouth congregation also formed a part of the parish. Both congregations were small, the people were mine workers for the most part, and the two great

coal strikes in the coal fields during those years prostrated industries, impoverished the people, and demoralized church work. Nevertheless, 175 new names were added to the rolls.

On the first Sunday of November, 1901, I began my ministry at New Philadelphia, Ohio, and remained there just six years to the day. During this period a church debt of several thousand dollars was paid, a \$3500 parsonage was built, the church was entirely renovated, an addition for the primary department was built, the benevolences were increased yearly to four times the best previous figure, and 252 new members were added to the church.

I have always given the best there was in me to my congregation, my classis, and my synod, and these have not been unappreciative. During my ministry I have been elected to the following church positions: President of St. John's Classis, 1903-5; Board of Trustees of Central Synod, 1904-7; Treasurer of Central Synod, 1905-6; Treasurer of St. John's Classis since 1905; Board of Church Erection of the three western German Synods since 1908; President of the Sunday School Board of Central Synod, 1908-9; President of Central Synod 1911-12; Delegate to General Synod, 1905, 1908, and 1914. I was also a member of the commission that issued the "Survey of the Reformed Church," and wrote the church history section and a few other lessons for the third volume of the "Advanced Teachers' Training Course," besides being a frequent contributor to the church papers and other periodicals.

In addition to the college and seminary work already mentioned, I have pursued special work under the direction of the University of Chicago, in Old Testament prophecy, and for additional work in sociology, economics, and psychology, received from the Illinois Wesleyan University the degree of Bachelor of Philosophy in 1904, and Master of Arts in 1908.

After these unseemly and egoistical wanderings in my personal experiences, we will now return to the more humble vocation of the historian.

The most important events of Rev. Bolliger's pastorate since 1907 can best be presented by grouping them topically.

*The language question* loomed up rather threateningly at the beginning. During the three previous pastorates the English had been introduced gradually, until towards the end of Rev. Nau's ministry the Sunday School was practically all English with the exception of the pastor's class, and all services were English except the Sunday morning worship. When the vote was taken by the congregation a few weeks before Rev. Nau left on the question whether an English service should be introduced every two weeks in the morning it was carried by considerably more than a two-third's majority. The consistory decided that the new order should not go into effect until the new pastor should take charge, and that during the vacancy the German morning services should be continued.

When Rev. Bolliger began his work and the English service actually displaced the German, a very considerable feeling was aroused. Some threatened to boycott the English services entirely, others vowed they would cut down their subscriptions, still others forbade their children to remain for the English sermon. It was rather freely predicted by some that the church could not pay its bills on account of the displeasure of the German members. One old lady said to the pastor, "I'm only going to live a few years yet, and so long as I live, they might have kept up the German. I don't care what they do after I'm dead." But subsequent events proved that the fear of harm to the congregation was groundless. Not a single member stayed away on account of the language and not more than two or three actually reduced their subscriptions. The German members have stood nobly by their service, and have made it the service with the highest average attendance, in spite of the fact that not more than twenty Germans have been added during the past ten years, as compared to 592 English. Our German-speaking members stick.

*The pruning of the Church-roll* was the next pressing problem. A few weeks before Rev. Bolliger arrived in Canton, Rev. Nau wrote him a letter of congratulation in which he said: "The one great problem for which I could devise no solution was the awakening of the negligent ones. I tried my best



and failed. I sincerely hope you may solve it successfully." Just how serious a problem it was the new pastor did not realize until he had visited, or tried to locate, every person that was found on the roll. Some surprises were met during the first months of visiting. Some denied that they had ever joined the church, others declared they were done with the church, others explained they had liked Rev. Nau and hence permitted their names to be enrolled but did not wish to be members any longer since he had left. The large majority of these "negligent ones" made profuse promises for the future.

The consistory and pastor then decided upon a systematic campaign to win the backsliding ones back. Countless visits were made by them and committees of faithful men and women. The slogan was emphasized, "Every member attending, working, praying and giving." (See Heb. 10: 25, Js. 2: 17, 1 Thess. 5: 17, Acts 20: 35.) No name was removed from the roll until every means to win them back had been tried. The consistory surpassed in its patience even the requirements of our constitution. When finally, the process of purification was completed, it was found that of the 1046 members reported by Rev. Nau to Classis in 1907, a total of 382 had disappeared. Of this number 337 simply did not attend or support the church in any manner, at any time, during the present pastorate; the rest maintained a nominal relation to the church for a while and then also had to be dropped.

The gap created by these erasures has been more than filled by the addition of 338 by confirmation, including the youth of the church and adults, and 274 by reprofession and dismissals from other churches. The additions by letter from other churches have always been rather small. The total number of members, according to the last report to classis, is 1078. This number also includes a certain small group, whose names are retained in the hope that they may again be awakened, and become active in the kingdom of our God.

*Two debt-paying campaigns* have been carried to a successful conclusion during this pastorate. The Sunday School had offered to pay for the improvements made in the basement

in 1905, amounting to nearly \$1700. When Rev. Bolliger began his pastorate, this debt with accrued interest, still amounted to about \$1600. The Sunday School, under the enthusiastic guidance of superintendent William Daberko, at once began planning to pay off the debt, and before the end of the first year it was paid in full.

The money borrowed for the improvements made in 1906, amounting to \$1087, was not repaid until 1913. Before starting on his vacation that year, Rev. Bolliger outlined a plan to the consistory by which it was proposed to raise this amount during October. Then the pastor left for several weeks. Lo, and behold! when the parson returned, he was gladdened by the news that Superintendent Daberko had again pushed the matter to a successful conclusion during his absence, and the entire debt was out of the way.

At last the church was free!

*The contributions of the church* have steadily increased. The church raises funds for a twofold purpose; namely, for the local congregational expenses, and for the support of the benevolent enterprises of our denomination. In the nine and one-half years of Rev. Bolliger's pastorate a total of \$41,084 has been raised for congregational purposes, and \$9881 for benevolence. This would be an average of \$4319 for ourselves, and \$1040 for others, annually. The lowest amount given during the period annually for congregational purposes was \$3361; the highest was \$6348. The lowest benevolent offerings were given during the first year amounting to \$570; the highest were \$1626.

In order to see clearly the handsome increase in the contributions of the congregation, the average for the last eight years of Rev. Nau's pastorate will be given by way of comparison. For congregational purposes including the cost of the Sunday School addition the average was \$4304; for benevolent purposes \$474. It will thus be evident that the spirit of sacrifice which is the spirit of Christ, has increased very substantially.





INTERIOR VIEW, REAR  
*Taken after renovation of 1916*







INTERIOR VIEW, FRONT  
*Taken after renovation of 1916*

*Many improvements on the church property* have also been made. The basement has been re-frescoed and re-varnished two times, several new toilet rooms were installed and the heating plant thoroughly overhauled. During the summer of 1910, the entire church was re-laid with a heavy Brussels carpet at an expense of \$1400. Several years later, a new roof was put on the entire Sunday School wing of the building. The most thorough renovation which the building has ever received was given it in 1916. The entire building was frescoed and re-decorated, the woodwork was stained to a dark oak, the pews were refinished in dark oak, and a new lighting system was installed. The old chandeliers with their unprotected electric lights so trying to the eyes were removed, and replaced with an indirect system most agreeable to the eyes and most beautiful in its artistic effects. The exterior of the church was also thoroughly repaired and painted, and a new roof placed on the older portion of the building. The total expense of the entire work amounted to nearly \$3000. In order to keep the church property in good condition, it is necessary to expend an average of about \$450 a year in repairs. Mention should also be made of the transformation of the old cemetery into a little park. In 1909, maple trees were set out, which in a few years will transform the old "God's acre" into as pretty a spot as can be found anywhere in Canton.

*The temperance agitations*, which have swept over Ohio during the last few years, have not left the First Church without profound modifications. In previous chapters it has been shown that the traditions and affiliations of the congregation have not always been very "dry." When the committee delegated by the consistory of the church to interview Rev. Bolliger at New Philadelphia, as to his willingness to consider a call to Canton, he very frankly informed them that he believed in total abstinence as the duty and ideal of a Christian, that he preached his convictions without hesitation, and would continue to do so wherever he was pastor; and hence had his doubts as to whether they really desired to consider him. The committee informed him that the consistory had

discussed that very point; but had nevertheless unanimously resolved to present his name to the congregation for election as pastor. By a peculiar coincidence, the second Sunday School lesson that the new pastor had to teach was on temperance; namely, Rom. 4: 12-23, and he very candidly, yet as considerately as possible, stated just what his convictions were in the matter. The same convictions were also freely expressed in his pulpit utterances. The members seemed to accept this sort of preaching very patiently; the only criticisms heard were from hardened backsliders and rank outsiders.

In 1909, came the first great fight for county local option. Rev. Bolliger presented the cause from the pulpit, and privately. As the campaign progressed, the situation in Canton became very tense. Attacks were made upon the church, the consistory and the pastor in the local German paper, and copied throughout the state by the German press. At first these attacks were simply ignored. Emboldened by the silence of the pastor, a number of articles were inserted in the German paper that were offensive and scurrilous. The editor very freely offered Rev. Bolliger all the space he might desire to answer these communications. A merry warfare ensued. A few quotations from the retorts which he published, may be of interest as indicating the intensity of the situation: "The statements as made are absolute lies. The article is filled with senseless folly, inaccuracies, and ignorance of the most common facts of history and Christianity. The writer lacks even the most elementary conception of the real meaning of Christianity." Notice was also given that any further articles containing statements of a slanderous nature against Rev. Bolliger, or his church, would start something that would put an effective stop to them. Thus ended the newspaper controversy.

Some of the "wet" sympathizers within the fold, then began to agitate the matter of silencing the preacher, among their fellow members. This gave occasion to the preaching of two special sermons at the climax of the excitement. In one of these Rev. Bolliger said: "If it were ever possible for the time to come, when I cannot stand in my pulpit, and preach on any

subject whatsoever that seems necessary, in any manner that seems most effective, and hit just as hard as the case requires; then, I can always quit the pulpit, and go out and haul manure, and raise cabbage heads, successfully." The agitators evidently concluded that there was no telling what the parson might start, and hence sweet tranquility gradually settled down on the troubled waters. Since then there have been two other campaigns for state-wide prohibition; each time the issues were freely discussed from the pulpit, and the men urged to help "Make Ohio Dry."

Throughout these eight years of the most intense temperance agitation that the state and our community has ever known, not more than half a dozen persons have actually withdrawn from the church on account of the pastor's advocacy of the prohibition movement, and none of these had been very active as members. Furthermore, during these years, not one member has ever protested to the pastor personally against the position which he occupied.

The temperance question in the First Reformed Church is settled. It is not possible ever again, to even consider a return to the former ways and practices.

*The "Billy Sunday" Campaign* during January and February of 1912 also marked an epoch in the congregation.

The consistory had unanimously decided to co-operate with the other churches of Canton in carrying through the union evangelistic campaign under Mr. Sunday's direction. Rev. Bolliger had cautioned them that "Billy Sunday" had a way of stirring folks up, arousing their resentment, and making the "wets" especially gnash their teeth. Nevertheless, all were in favor of his coming.

As the time set for the campaign approached, the forces of unrighteousness united in a fierce campaign of intimidation. The men in business, who were members of the First Church, were signalled out for bitter attacks. The superintendent of the Sunday School had to hear the angry snarl again and again: We will never buy another cent's worth of goods from you. The grocery keepers were told: You can't support Billy Sun-



day and do business with us. It was intimated to the pastor: Unless you keep quiet we will injure you as much as possible. The week before the campaign opened these threats reached their climax. A few quotations from an address which Rev. Bolliger delivered several times, immediately after the close of the campaign, while the experiences were still fresh in the mind, will best set forth this phase of the attack. "Several of the men of the consistory got cold feet and wanted to quit; faithful old stand-bys were frightened and said: Its going to break up the church; others declared: The preacher had no business getting us into anything like this. When the matter was put up to me by an elder, I said: Tell them they can't quit now; they can't back down; they have to go through with it. I'm going to fight it through to a finish. But I will promise you this right now, when the campaign is over, if it is the honest belief of the congregation that the church has been injured, I will hand in my resignation at once. I will not embarrass you. We will not quarrel. We will just kiss, and say good-bye, in perfect peace."

Then the campaign began, and in a few days "Billy" had won the town. In about two weeks, men in the congregation, who had vowed not to attend a single meeting, could be seen standing at the door of the tabernacle at twelve o'clock, so as to make sure of a seat at the two o'clock men's meeting. And as for the sisters who had sputtered loudest against "Billy's slang," they could be seen hurrying up North Market Street with the red-book in their hands, going so fast, an ordinary young person could never catch up with them.

As for the results in the congregation, they were good. More than a hundred members reconsecrated themselves to the service of God; about a score united with the church of whom we had known nothing before; and at least seventy, whom the pastor and members had tried unsuccessfully to bring to the point of decision before, became so awakened spiritually, that it was now easy to win them. Other beneficial results also followed: the average attendance of the Sunday School took a great leap forward; the missionary society had



a tidal wave of applicants who wanted to become active; men and women came forward to offer themselves as Sunday School teachers; the prayer meetings took on new life; and, for a while at least, religion became the chief thing.

To be sure, the waters sank back into quieter channels again; some who started out most enthusiastically have grown cold once more; but, those who got close to the work in those days, still testify to the abiding blessing which the campaign brought them.

Looking back after five years, the author is still ready to stand by the estimate of the movement which he made in the address already referred to: "In that tabernacle originated the mightiest, religious upheaval that Canton has ever had. The dry-bones in the churches rattled like three-score Dutch wind-mills in a storm. The brethren were shot so full of holes, they looked like a thirteen-cent sieve after seven years usage. The animals were aroused, and gnashed their teeth, like a herd of demons devouring a lost soul. Sinners were pounded until they cursed, and pounded more until they groaned, and pounded again until they cried: God be merciful to me a sinner. Impulses were received whose full fruitage only eternity will reveal. Lives were made over and are already blessing others."

The entire membership had become so interested before the end of the campaign was reached, that no one ever recalled that the parson had offered to resign, if it were thought that the church had suffered loss.

Though this chapter will not be the last in the completed book, it is the last to be written. In closing his long and arduous task the author would again drop into the first person for a few "closing remarks."

The writing of this book has been purely a labor of love, undertaken to acquaint our membership with some of the stirring scenes, through which our congregation has passed. Had I correctly estimated, at the beginning, the tremendous difficulties to be surmounted, I could hardly have mustered up courage enough to begin. I was determined not to let the work of the parish suffer on account of these historical investigations,

and so robbed myself of many hours of sleep and recreation. But, if the narrative awakens in the heart of the members an interest in their splendid history, a deeper love to their church, and a greater loyalty to the kingdom of God; then, indeed, am I richly rewarded.

I have given to Canton nearly ten of the best years of my life, and have received abundant evidence that the love and affection of the people is mine.

216 times have I heard the tinkling of the wedding bells, and seen the newly married couple go forth facing the future with shining face.

253 times have I baptized little children, and consecrated them to God and his church.

284 times have I stood beside the open grave and repeated the mournful words: "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

612 new members have I received into the church, of whom the greater part have remained faithful and active until now; - but some, alas, have fallen away. The church has become stronger, more liberal, more efficient. To God be all the glory!

Not only has our own church prospered but all the religious forces of Canton have great gains to record. Ten years ago the Young Men's Christian Association could hardly exist at all; today it has a fine, well equipped, \$250,000 building with a total membership surpassed by only half a dozen cities of the country. The Young Women's Christian Association has a record scarcely less laudable. All the churches have grown. It would be difficult to find another city the size of Canton containing so many up-to-date church edifices, occupied by so large and aggressive congregations. In the matter of big and enthusiastic Sunday Schools no other city surpasses Canton.

In material prosperity and growth of population, these ten years mark an amazing development. There are now more than three hundred factories, producing over a thousand dif-





# THE DEACONS

Top Row: N. O. Hexamer, August Daberkto, H. K. Fenwick, J. F. H. Deibel, O. J. Lotz, E. E. Link, H. J. Boldt  
 Bottom Row: W. Buchman Wm. Höfler, Jno. Marquardt, Albert Frey, Frank Smith







THE ELDERS

Top Row: William Feller, J. C. Feldheimer, Adam Thomas, Godfrey Snyder;  
Bottom Row: Alfred Raber, Theodore P. Bolliger, Charles Seemann

ferent products, and employing 18,000 persons, with a monthly payroll of \$1,000,000. Canton is a city of homes; most of our 72,000 citizens dwell by their own hearth and beneath their own roof-tree. New people are constantly pouring in, lured by the hope of good wages offered by the multiplying industries. This gives the pastors ever increasing numbers to win for Christ and the Church.

In industrial centers such as Canton all religious work is beset with many difficulties, but our heavenly Father has always granted a sufficient measure of success to faithful effort, to keep courage and go forward.

The members of the consistory have always supported the pastor most loyally, and co-operated with him most willingly. The present consistory consists of the following men: Elders: J. C. Feldheimer, William Feller, Alfred Raber, Chs. Seemann, Godfrey Snyder, Adam Thomas. Deacons: H. J. Boldt, F. W. Buchman, J. F. H. Deibel, Aug. Daberko, H. K. Fenwick, Albert Frey, N. O. Hexamer, William Hohler, E. E. Link, O. J. Lotz, John Marquardt, Frank Smith.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

NONE of the records of the Sunday School during the first sixty years of its existence have come down to us. Indeed it is probable that during most of this period no written records were kept. The exact date of the founding of the Canton School can no longer be determined. The minutes of the first meeting of the Ohio Classis in 1820 contain the statement that the Canton charge had ten congregations and eight Sunday Schools. Since Canton had the largest congregation at that date, it is certain that there was also a Sunday School. Though it is not possible to show any written proof for the assertion it is at least very probable that the Sunday School was organized about the same time as the congregation. From 1812 on, Rev. Mahnenschmidt visited the Canton field regularly, and conducted catechetical classes and divine services. He would not fail to provide some means of teaching the young, during the long intervals between his visits. Hence, the year 1812 may be accepted as marking the humble beginnings of the present prosperous school.

Originally the teaching of the Bible and religion was not emphasized as it is now. The Sunday School was at first looked upon as a convenient arrangement, for teaching the scholars to read and understand enough of the German language, so that they could learn the chief question of the catechism in the mother tongue. As the scholars acquired some facility in reading, the Bible was placed in their hands as the only text book. Rev. Benjamin Faust was an enthusiastic Sunday School man and worker for the general distribution of the Bible. In 1827, he was vice-president of the Stark County Bible Society, whose avowed purpose was to put a copy of the Word of God into every home of the county.

The general plan and purpose of the Sunday School continued without change until the time of the new-measure move-



# THE SUNDAY SCHOOL OFFICERS

*Top Row: Carl E. Snyder, Lawrence Offenburger, Carl Rober  
 Middle Row: Mrs. Pauline Becker, Mrs. Anna Bogelstoun, Ethel Miller, Emma Grether, Mrs. Katherine Rich,  
 Clarence Baab, Warren Link  
 Bottom Row: Mrs. Margaret Gehring, Lester H. Higgins, Mrs. Laura Doum, H. A. Deibel, Wm. Dabeko,  
 August Schuitzebel, C. R. Brouneuell.*





ment. That movement forced the congregations to put a larger emphasis upon the religious and spiritual aspects of the Sunday School work. But the ideals did not rise very high in the demands made upon the character of the teachers; for even as late as 1880, the chief requisite seems to have been the ability to teach the German language. If the individual was able to do that, saloon-keepers or bar-tenders were accepted as teachers without arousing any serious antagonism.

The Sunday School was entirely German until the close of Rev. Herbruck's pastorate. When English services were introduced at the beginning of Rev. Rust's labors, English classes were also formed in the school, although the opening service and the singing were still conducted in German. The number of English classes gradually increased; for the younger generation was nearly all English. The phenomenal wave of German immigration to Ohio reached its crest even before Rev. Herbruck had closed his labors. Within a decade, the number of Germans coming to Canton had shrunk to quite insignificant proportions. Hence, the amount of English used in the school increased very rapidly. From 1886 to 1916 the school has grown from an all-German to an all-English organization, with the exception of the German class taught by the pastor, whose membership is made up, for the most part, of individuals of German and Swiss birth.

During the first years of the transition period, the superintendent had to be German; then an English and a German superintendent were appointed, and co-operated in conducting the school; then the German superintendent was dropped.

The names of all the early superintendents have disappeared in the mists of the past. It is no longer possible to secure the names even of the superintendents during the latter part of Rev. Herbruck's pastorate. Probably the reason why their personalities did not impress themselves upon the memory of the older members who are still in the church, is to be found in the fact that in those days the place filled by the superintendent was rather insignificant, and the further fact that the school was looked upon as being intended only for the children

and young folks, and hence, the adult portion of the congregation hardly knew who was acting as superintendent.

During the last third of a century the following superintendents have served:

<i>German</i>		<i>English</i>	
Christoph Leonhart	1885—90	Phil Weber	1890—91
Alfred Raber	1891—99	J. F. H. Deibel	1892—99
Fred Schweitzer	1900	Howard Dine	1900
Alfred Raber	1901—04	William Daberko	1901—

The school is now divided into the following departments: Primary, Junior, Intermediate, Adult, and Home. A Cradle Roll of 125 members is also maintained. The points of efficiency of a front-line school, as generally recognized in the Sunday School world, have all been attained.

The benevolent spirit has been carefully fostered, and large gifts are annually offered. Five regular special days are observed each year, namely: Foreign Mission, Children's Day, Rally Day, Home Mission, and Christmas. As a rule, the Children's Day offering is given to the Sunday School extension work of the Reformed Church; the Christmas offering to the Fort Wayne Orphans' Home; the beneficiary of the Rally Day offering is designated by the teachers themselves; while the mission-day offerings are sent to the respective boards conducting the work. The Easter offering is divided between home and foreign missions.

Since 1910, the school has also emphasized the Birthday offerings. Each member is sent a card of congratulation on his birthday with a little envelope into which an offering may be put. From these offerings a \$500 church erection fund has already been given to the Board of Church Erection of the three German Synods. These offerings since November of 1914, have been devoted to the making of a monthly payment of \$20 on the lots which were purchased for the site of the fourth Reformed church in Canton. A second \$500 church erection fund has also been given by Mrs. Fred Narwold, a member of the school, in memory of her mother, Mrs. Sophia Benecker, who was killed on Sunday morning, July 6, 1912, while cross-

ing the railroad tracks on her way to Sunday School, where she was enrolled as a member of the German Bible class.

Special offerings for benevolence are also frequently taken. Aid has thus been extended to war sufferers, flood sufferers, hospitals, Salvation Army, Y. M. C. A., Bible Society, Harbor Mission, Winnebago Indians, etc., etc. The total, for benevolence alone, during the last five years, 1911-1916, reached the handsome sum of \$3132.

Neither has the school been unmindful of the local congregational needs. Many hundreds of dollars have been contributed towards rebuilding, repairing, renovating, re-carpeting, Sunday School furniture and equipment, etc., etc.

The growth of the school numerically can be given only from the time when Canton formed a parish by itself, and the statistics of the Canton School appear in the published minutes of the Synod. Beginning with 1875 the enrollment at the end of each five-year period is given: 1875, 200; 1880, 250; 1885, 300; 1890, 300; 1895, 475; 1900, 420; 1905, 750; 1910, 780; 1915, 950.

The school in recent years has been especially fortunate in having a splendid corps of workers. Many of the teachers have served for years with great ability and conscientiousness. The measure of success which the school has had is due entirely to the faithful efforts of the teachers and officers.

At the present time (January 1917) the working force consists of 17 officers and 36 teachers whose names are recorded below.

#### OFFICERS

WILLIAM DABERKO.....	Superintendent
H. A. DEIBEL.....	Assistant Superintendent
AUGUST SCHWITZGEBEL..	Secretary.
LAWRENCE OFFENBURGER ..	Senior Secretary
WARREN LINK .....	Junior Secretary
LESTER H. HIGGINS.....	Treasurer
EMMA GRETHER.....	Rec. Secretary
CARL E. SNYDER.....	Birthday Secretary
C. R. BROWNEWELL.....	Librarian
CARL RABER .....	Assistant Librarian
ETHEL C. MILLER.....	Pianist

MRS. PAULINE BEITER .....	Supt. Cradle Roll
MRS. KATHERINE RICH.....	Assistant Supt. Cradle Roll
MRS. FRED BOYDELATOUR.....	Supt. Home Dept.
MRS. WM. GEHRING.....	Assistant Superintendent
ANNA ENZMANN .....	Supt. Primary Department
HAZEL TROUTNER.....	Secretary Primary Dept.
MRS. R. W. DOURM.....	Visitor Home Dept.
MRS. EMMA TROUTNER.....	Visitor Home Dept.
JOHN MARQUARDT .....	Usher
CLARENCE BAAB .....	Usher
H. K. FENWICK .....	Usher

## TEACHERS

Letta Anderson,	Martha Lahm,
Mrs. Sam. Bachtel,	Thomas Leahy,
Minnie Baab,	Estella A. Miller,
Gertrude Biller,	Clara L. Miller,
Mrs. D. M. Binns,	Leah Neher,
Aurelia Bolliger,	Pauline Nelson,
Rev. Theo. P. Bolliger,	Estella L. Narwold,
Mrs. Elizabeth Bolliger,	Hilda Nelson,
Grace Boydelatour,	Mary Offenburger,
J. F. H. Deibel,	Faith E. Pecher,
Mrs. H. A. Deibel,	Amelia Riniker,
Ruth Feldheimer,	Elsie Schaub,
Elsie Fisher,	Chas. Seemann,
Mrs. Emma Frank,	Florence M. Studer,
Emma Grether,	Pearl Snyder,
N. O. Hexamer,	Mrs. Katherine M. Thom,
Wm. G. Hohler,	Mrs. Adam Thomas,
Blanche Hohler,	Mrs. Albert Trachsel.



# THE ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

*Top Row: Amelia Riniker, Mary Offenburger, Mrs. Emma Frank, Emma Grether, Martha Lahm, Elsie Fisher  
 Bottom Row: Lech Neher, J. F. H. Deibel, Theodore P. Bolliger, Chs. Seemann, Mrs. Clara Trachsel*







THE INTERMEDIATE AND JUNIOR TEACHERS

*Top Row: Elsie Schaub, Estella Miller, Ruth Feldheimer, Florence Studer, Grace Bodelatour, Letta Anderson  
Bottom Row: Gertrude Bille, Mrs. H. A. Daibel, Mrs. Katherine Thom, William Kohler, N. O. Hexamer,  
Mrs. Emma Trounher, L. Aurelia Bolliger*





THE PRIMARY TEACHERS AND OFFICERS

*Top Row: Hazel Trounher, Edith Dabeko, Estella Narvoold, Mrs. Katherine Bims, Hilda Nelson, Blanche Hohler*  
*Bottom Row: Pearl Snyder, Mrs. Elizabeth Bolliger, Anna Enzmann, Mrs. Martha Bachte, Pauline Nelson, Clara Miller*





## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE SINGING, THE ORGANS, AND THE CHOIR

THE congregational singing during the first thirty years would be judged as very crude from the modern standpoint, for there were neither songbooks nor musical instruments. The early members had come from various parts of Germany and Switzerland, as well as from various eastern states. Though a German hymnal was apt to be a part of the family possessions, the chances were that hardly two would be alike. Under such conditions the only solution of the difficulty was for the minister to first read the stanzas to be sung, and then read them again line by line, waiting between lines for the congregation to sing them. In many cases the minister also had to be the leader of the singing. This was a very considerable additional burden to him, as Dr. Buettner testifies, "When there is no one to lead the singing, which happens frequently, then the minister must almost contract consumption on account of his much singing and preaching." (See Chapter IX.)

About 1840, a union hymn book for Reformed and Lutheran congregations was introduced, and three years later an organ was bought. "It had only five registers and was entirely too small," but its use so stimulated the desire for better singing that the first choir was organized. About 1850, George Deuble became the director of the choir and the organist, and remained in this position for 35 years, serving for most of the period without salary.

The first organ served for thirteen years, and then was displaced by a fine new instrument. Rev. Herbruck waxes quite enthusiastic in his description of the new acquisition saying: "The present organ has thirteen registers and is put up in an elegant style. It has a beautiful sound, and its internal construction is so convenient, that I never saw an organ to equal it. If anything should get out of order, one can with the greatest ease come to any pipe or to any of its mechanical parts." The

organ was dedicated on Sunday, July 13, 1856. The church was crowded and "the well-practiced choir sang." Rev. D. Kaemmerrer, pastor of the Orrville church, preached on the text Psalm 147: 7, and Rev. Buckingham of the Canton Presbyterian Church chose Psalm 98: 5. When the Reformed congregation separated from the Lutheran in 1862, the right of the Reformed people in this second organ had to be surrendered to the Lutherans.

A third organ was purchased for the new church, and installed in the exact middle of the gallery. As money was scarce only the most necessary parts were bought at first. The organ was used in this incomplete condition for seven years. In 1869, the consistory sent "for the pipes and keys necessary to finish the organ, at an additional cost of \$322." During Rev. Rust's pastorate, the organ was removed from the gallery and placed in the front of the auditorium, into the addition which had been built for the purpose. The instrument was also rebuilt and enlarged. During the following pastorate, the organ was again improved by adding two registers at an expense of \$175. Just before Rev. Nau began his labors the organ was given another improvement which cost \$230.00, and a motor was installed a little later. The old familiar handle that had worked the bellows for thirty-five years thus entered into its well-deserved rest.

Eight years later an agitation began in the congregation for a new and modern pipe organ. The purchase of such an instrument became possible in 1905 through the generosity of the heirs of Henry A. Rupp, an old and faithful member of the congregation, who contributed \$1000. An additional \$1500 was given by Andrew Carnegie. These two gifts with the addition of \$600 given by the members, and \$500 allowed for the old organ, made it possible to install the handsome and eminently satisfactory instrument still in use.\*

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\* This instrument was built by the A. J. Schantz Organ Company, Orrville, Ohio. The old organ was then entirely rebuilt by the Schantz Company, and sold to the First Christian Church of New Philadelphia, Ohio, where it is still in constant use.

The organ was dedicated Jan. 28, 1906. The sermons were preached by Rev. J. H. Bosch, Fort Wayne, Ind., who spoke on the last Psalm in German, and Rev. E. S. Neikirk, then pastor of the Wooster, Ohio, church, whose text was Rev. 5: 9, "And they sung a new song." The concert given by the choir the following Tuesday was declared "the finest ever given in the church."

From the time of its organization down to the present, the choir has been one of the most pleasing and efficient aids to the worship through song. Though during these seventy years it has passed through numerous ups and downs, and changes of personnel, the congregation has never lacked a group of willing singers sacrificing time and talent to aid the public worship. Many a successful, well-attended, and financially remunerative concert has also been given. Tradition still bears witness to the "wonderful singers of bygone days and the ability of the old choir in song." The congregation certainly is indebted to them.

The list of organists who have served is as follows: George Deuble, 1850-1886; L. A. Clewell, 1886-1898; H. J. Ballard 1898-1914. Ervin L. Leslie, 1914—. The first three men served as choir-directors as well as organists, with the exception of brief periods when different directors assisted. Three directors, however, have served for longer periods, namely: T. Dillwyn Thomas, 1914-15; Aubrey W. Barlow, 1915-16; J. S. Stoner, 1916—.

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE GERMAN SCHOOL

THE large German immigration from 1860-80, which brought many new residents to Canton from Germany and Switzerland, meant a corresponding increase of members for the Canton Church. Even before the new church dedicated in 1862 had been quite paid for, the project of building a schoolhouse was launched. The members took enthusiastically to the idea of having a parochial school, in which their beloved mothertongue could be taught. A frame building was erected on the southwest corner of the church ground, on the site which is now covered by the Sunday School room.

No written records concerning the school, or the teachers and their length of service, have been preserved. It has been necessary to gather the facts largely from the recollections of the pupils who attended the school. The length of service and the time assigned to each teacher are only approximately correct. The first teacher's name could not be ascertained, though he taught for two years, from 1866-7.

As the second teacher the congregation was peculiarly fortunate in securing Theodore Mueller, who had been born in Stargard, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Germany, and received his education there. Upon arriving in Canton, he was engaged to teach the school, which he did with much skill and acceptability. In addition to teaching, he also assisted Rev. Herbruck in his pastoral activities, preaching occasionally for some of the outlying congregations. He was licensed by St. John's Classis, in 1869, and preached regularly thereafter until his death. On one of these trips he contracted pneumonia, and died December 29, 1870, at the early age of thirty-six years. Rev. Herbruck, in a letter written soon after Mr. Mueller's death, gave him this testimony, "He was a good husband to his wife, a good father to his children, an active member of the church, and a true servant of the Lord." The congregation, in appreciation



THE GERMAN SCHOOL.  
*Taken in 1883. Mr. Rudolph Leonhart, Teacher*





of his faithful services, erected a small house, located on the spot where the Wheeling and Lake Erie round house now is, which was occupied for years by the family of the deceased.\*

During the first years the teaching was entirely in German, and the teacher was compensated by the tuition-fees paid by the parents of the pupils, amounting to fifty cents a month for each pupil. Mr. Mueller did not consider this a good plan and labored to secure the introduction of some English. He counted it as an especial achievement that this plan was sanctioned by the congregation, and that the Canton school board declared its willingness to rent the building, pay the salary of the teacher, and conduct the school as a part of the public-school system, with one-half of the time being devoted to the German language.

Mr. Mueller died before this plan could be put into operation. The unexpired term from January to June, 1871, seems to have been taught by ——— Karr. He was followed probably for one year by ——— Haushalter. At least, these men taught for a short period, and their names do not appear in the records of the Canton school board as having been employed by them. Hence, it is probable that for some unknown reason, the operation of the contemplated plan was delayed.

The first teacher employed by the board was ——— Gruesie, who taught from 1872-77. This man was a unique character, and impressed his peculiarities upon the memories of the pupils in such a way, that an abundance of school incidents are still told with great gusto. One day the schoolmaster took a little nap during the teaching hours, an occurrence which happened somewhat frequently. One of the older boys took advantage of the opportunity, and put several small mice into the master's violin with which he was wont to lead the music. Lest the mice escape the boy also pasted paper over the open-

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\* At that time the entire southeastern quarter of what is now Canton was covered with fields and orchards of idyllic beauty. Mrs. Mueller has declared, "We lived there as in paradise." The widow, Mrs. Mueller, and the two children, Theodore and Emma, have remained members of the First Church throughout the years.

ings. After a while the master awoke and seeing that it was about closing time gave directions to put the books away and prepare for the closing singing period. Now when he began to play, things began to happen. The mice squeaked and scampered about, and the pupils roared. Much incensed, the teacher demanded the name of the perpetrator of the trick. No one would betray him. So the master promised a thrashing to everyone in the school, and proceeded to put his threat into execution. The older pupils took their medicine with a grin; but when the teacher began to chastise the smaller ones, the guilty boy could stand it no longer, and jumped up and attacked the teacher. In the scuffle that ensued, the violin was broken over the boy's head, and the boy's school-days ended then and there.

On another occasion a boy giggled while watching a mouse play hide-and-seek in the schoolroom. Refusing to explain his unseemly conduct, he was locked into the cellar. The lad at once took out the frame of the window, crawled out, put the frame into place again from the outside and scampered off. This strange disappearance greatly mystified the teacher, who could not understand how the boy had got out of the locked window.

Mr. Guessie is also remembered on account of little, two-line, funny jingles, which he used to compose and get off at the expense of the pupils. Some of these are still to be heard when his former scholars are in a reminiscent mood.

From 1878-80 Mr. B. F. Schwier was in charge. No particular incidents concerning his incumbency have been preserved.

The last teacher was Rudolph Leonhart (1881-5). He was a man with several college degrees and splendid abilities. He was also the author of a number of novels which acquired some little fame, such as, *The Treasure of Montezuma*, *The Wild Rose*, *Through Blood and Iron*, *Children of the Outlaws*, and others. At the time of his service in Canton, he was an old man, rapidly becoming blind. Though teaching with great acceptability, his physical infirmity was a handicap which some

of the bad boys of the school occasionally used, to perpetrate the mean little trick of pinning a pig's tail to the teacher's coat, which contributed considerably to the merriment of the entire school. Mr. Leonhart's eyesight finally became so poor, that he was forced to give up his teaching, but even after total blindness had come, he zealously continued his literary activities.

After 1885, the old building was used for many purposes, such as choir rehearsals, band practice, catechetical instruction, consistory meetings, society meetings, social gatherings, and on Sunday it was occupied by the Primary Department of the Sunday School.

In 1899 the building was sold to the Gibbs Manufacturing Company for \$100, and was removed to their plant, where for years it has been used as the office of the concern.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE GERMAN LADIES' AID SOCIETY

THE German Ladies' Aid Society has been in continuous operation since 1879. It had, however, two predecessors, which, during the years that the church was being built, had rendered most valuable service. These earlier organizations, which were known as "The Woman's Society" and "The Maidens' Society", busily sewed, served suppers, and collected by personal solicitation, in order to secure funds for the large bell still in the steeple and for part of the interior furnishings of the church. When the church was all paid for, the organizations were allowed to disband.

After an interval of about fourteen years, the need of a woman's aid society became insistent again, and hence, in 1879, a new organization was effected. The minutes of the first meeting, recorded in the handwriting of Rev. P. Herbruck, read as follows: "The Woman's Society of the Reformed Jerusalem's Congregation of Canton, Ohio, was organized February 19, 1879. Mrs. Lydia Hexamer was elected as chairman, and Mrs. Susanna Deuble as treasurer. The society will meet once every two weeks. Each member will pay, if possible, ten cents at each meeting. The monies are to be expended for home and foreign missions and other benevolent purposes."

The women united with the new organization with gladness, and within a year forty-six members were enrolled. The organization of the society during the days of Rev. Herbruck's pastorate was unique. The officers elected merely had the honor of the position; for the pastor presided at the meetings, recorded the minutes, took charge of the money, disbursed it according to his best judgment, and simply reported his actions to the society.

The members worked with remarkable faithfulness to secure funds. In addition to the regular monthly dues of





THE LADIES' AID SOCIETY



twenty cents, the women secured considerable amounts from sewing, suppers, bazaars, special offerings and gifts.

The list of disbursements during the first years displays a truly remarkable array of benevolent and good works. It will prove of interest to give the complete list of the first two years.

For cleaning the church .....	\$30.00
" missions .....	10.00
" groceries for a sick man .....	2.05
" the blind minister Z.....	5.00
" clothes for poor children.....	3.90
" Catherine ——— .....	2.05
" the church paper for two inmates of the infirmary	4.00
" chairs in the church .....	64.00
" the classical contingents .....	30.00
" the Tract Society .....	5.00
" Christmas gifts for the Sunday School.....	5.50
" a jubilee present to Rev. —.....	34.00

The society was also active in giving much necessary help to the congregation. Thus we find it helping to build and paint the parsonage, pay the taxes, sewer assessment, street-paving, repair the organ, fix up the furnace, paint the church, remodel the church, pay part of the janitor's salary, etc., etc.

All together the record of the society is one to be proud of; and the good work has continued until this day.

Early in the history of the society, the custom also arose of presenting a small gift to the family of diseased members where there appeared to be need. This custom gradually led to the creation of a special "funeral fund" in 1899. From this fund the family of "every member in good standing" was to be "entitled to twenty dollars at her death." The burden of maintaining this funeral fund became too heavy, after the transition of the congregation from the German to the English language, had made it impossible to prevent the rapid decrease of the number of active members. When the society realized that its entire income was being used up to pay the funeral claims, it decided in 1916 to abolish the death benefits entirely,

and work only to assist congregational and denominational lines of activity.

The Woman's Society at the period of its greatest prosperity numbered 140 members. Since all the meetings of the society are conducted entirely in German, it has been impossible for years to secure new members except at long intervals. As nearly all the members are advanced in years, deaths have been very frequent. The present membership is eighty.

During the last twenty-seven years, Mrs. Flora Heidrich has served as the active and efficient president. Of the charter members who were present at the organization of the society in 1879, four remain as active members until now, namely: Mesdames Elizabeth Arnold, Susanna Krieg, Katherine Paar and Katherine Schwingel.

The present officers are: President, Mrs. Flora Heidrich; Recording Secretary, Mrs. Bertha Zurcher; Treasurer, Mrs. Minnie C. Hartung; Treasurer, Flower Fund, Mrs. Caroline Schaub. The last three have held these offices for a score of years.



THE OFFICERS AND SURVIVING CHARTER MEMBERS OF THE LADIES' AID SOCIETY

*Top Row: Mesdames, Minnie Perret, Marie Schaefer, Bertha Zuercher, Minnie C. Hartung, Flora Heidrich, Caroline Schaub*

*Bottom Row: Mesdames, Susan Krieg, Catharine Schuengel, Catharine Paar, Elizabeth Arnold*

*The ladies in the bottom row are the surviving charter members*









THE FORMER CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR PRESIDENTS

Top row: Elsie Schaub, Mrs. Katherine Binns  
 Middle Row: Pearl Snyder, Pauline Nelson, N. O. Hexamer, A. Huber, A. Schaub, Minnie Schneider, Mrs. Gertrude Nist  
 Bottom Row: Wm. Dabenko, J. F. H. Deibel, Chris. Sander, Leah Neher, Mrs. Mary Sander, Mrs. Louise Newacheck, Charles Seemann  
 Ernest Miller

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR

**A**MONG the organizations connected with the church, the Christian Endeavor Society has been one of the most fruitful agencies in training active workers. A long and splendid list of elders, deacons, Sunday School superintendents, teachers, and leaders in the missionary societies, received their initiation into active Christian service in this society. The young people of the church were trained through it in public speaking and prayer; they learned to co-operate with others through the committee duties; they acquired a sense of responsibility for the success of the church; they became educated in church and missionary activities; and finally, they increased in the grace of giving.

Before the organization of the Christian Endeavor Society, a young people's society known as "The Willing Workers" had been in existence. This society seems to have had for its main object the giving of financial assistance to the church and hence could not meet the needs of the spiritual development of the young people.

Dr. Strassner, a few months after beginning his pastorate, induced the younger members of the congregation to organize a Christian Endeavor Society. The minutes of the first meeting when a temporary organization was effected read as follows:

"Canton, Ohio, June 1, 1890. The Young People of the German Reformed Church met at 3 P.M. Miss Lizzie Walker acted as president; Miss Mary Speck as secretary. We organized a Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor."

On the tenth of June, the society met again, and formed a permanent organization. The usual officers of a Christian Endeavor Society were elected for a term of six months only. Dr. Strassner became the first president. The committees

appointed were called: music, calling, missionary, temperance, and relief.

During the first six months the society used the topics as appointed for Christian Endeavor societies; but the members were a little chary about signing the pledge and adopting a distinctly Christian Endeavor constitution; hence, the end of the year was reached before the first pledges were signed. Among these first signers appear the names of several who later rendered good service as members of the consistory; viz.: Fred Baker, J. F. H. Deibel, Chris. Sander, Charles Seemann, Adam Thomas and Phil Weber; and also the following who have made a noble record as Sunday School teachers: Katie Elbel (Leidig), Leah Neher, Minnie Snyder, Gertrude Talbot (Nist) and William Daberko.

In addition to the well-known work carried on by Christian Endeavor societies, our society early assumed certain definite tasks which would help the church. In 1892, the practice of furnishing flowers the year around, for adorning the communion table during the church services, was begun and has been faithfully kept up to the present. Each Sunday evening these flowers are then distributed to the sick and shut-ins. Special missionary pledges have been made from time to time and faithfully paid for long periods. The society has also contributed for special needs of the church as occasions arose.

A Junior Endeavor Society was also organized November 3, 1894, and flourished greatly for a period. The problem of a successful Junior Society has always been solved, when a capable and consecrated superintendent was to be found. When such a leader was not at hand, the society went to sleep. Probably the fact that the catechetical classes have always been especially stressed by the pastors, has made the carrying on of a Junior Society peculiarly difficult. After prolonged periods of rest, the Junior Society has been several times reorganized. The following rendered good service as superintendents and assistants: Mrs. F. Strassner and Mary Speck (Sander), 1894-96; Mrs. F. C. Nau and Leah Neher, 1897-—; Mrs. Clara Weiss, 1903-4; Mrs. Gertrude Nist and Mrs. Clara Ray,



1906-7; Estella Miller, 1908; Marie Smith, 1914-15; Pearl Snyder, 1915. This list does not include all those who were active in Junior work; for generally a committee appointed by the senior society aided the superintendent in charge. The names of the entire committees are unfortunately no longer on record.

At first the presidents of the senior society were elected for a term of six months only, and changes were rapid. More recently the term was extended to one year and re-elections have been frequent. Since 1908 the president's term has begun in October of each year. A complete list of the presidents and the time during which they served is here given.

Rev. F. Strassner,	1890	Minnie Schneider,	1905—06
Charles Seeman,	1891	Gertrude Talbot (Nist),	1907—08
Louise Bauhof		Katherine Enzmann	
(Newacheck),	1892	(Binns),	1909
Mary Speck (Sander),	1893	Chas. W. Arnold,	1910
Leah Neher,	1894	N. O. Hexamer,	1911—12
Mrs. Louise Newacheck,	1895	Elsie Schaub,	1912—13
Chris. Sander,	1895—96	Andrew Huber,	1914
J. F. H. Deibel,	1897—99	Ernest Miller,	1914—15
William Daberko,	1900—03	Pauline Nelson,	1916
Arthur Schaub,	1904	Pearl Snyder,	1916—17

The membership of the society in the days of its greatest popularity was over one-hundred. Since the organized Sunday School classes have multiplied and become active, the Christian Endeavor Society has found it increasingly difficult to maintain a large membership. Though the present membership is only fifty, the effective training work of the society has not been diminished.

The present officers are: President, Pearl Snyder; Vice President, Louise V. Bolliger; Recording Secretary, Warren Link; Corresponding Secretary, L. Aurelia Bolliger; Financial Secretary, Hilda R. Schmidt; Treasurer, Pauline Nelson.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

THE organization of the Woman's Missionary Society sprang from the need of an English speaking society which could assist in missionary and congregational activities. The women of the church who could not speak the German language were unable to co-operate with the German Ladies' Aid Society, and hence, an agitation was begun to call a new organization into existence.

The consistory gladly sanctioned the plan February 7, 1902 in the following resolution, "A motion prevailed that the consistory recommend a new organization called 'Ladies' Missionary Society' or some other appropriate name." During the following months the women interested got together, and by the beginning of 1903 they were ready to organize. Seventeen ladies met January 18, 1903. Rev. Nau acted as temporary chairman and explained the work and organization of a missionary society. The first officers elected were Mrs. Clara Weiss, president; Mrs. Eva Thomas, secretary; Mrs. Kate Thom, treasurer.

The object of the new organization which was known at first as "The Ladies' Missionary Society" was stated in the constitution adopted, as being twofold; first, "To awaken and foster the missionary spirit in our church and to labor earnestly and systematically in behalf of the missionary interests of the Reformed Church in the United States, home and foreign missions alike"; secondly, "To labor earnestly to further the work of the local church in all its departments by attending regularly the Sunday services, by working for the Sunday School, by fostering the spirit of sociability, and by helping the church in every possible way." A monthly contribution of at least ten cents per member was also decided upon.

Several months after the organization, a membership contest was inaugurated. The society was divided into two



THE WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY  
*Officers of the Society and Charter Members in center*



groups: the one carried the national colors, red, white, and blue; the other had the Reformed Church colors, black, red, and orange. By the end of the first year the membership had thus been increased to sixty-eight.

During the first five and one-half years, the organization operated simply as a congregational society distributing its gifts from time to time according to its preference. Home and foreign missionary objects received about half of the total income; the remainder was given to various congregational needs, such as, music fund, cleaning the church, building and repair fund, etc.

At the February meeting, 1905, the society entered upon a new phase of work which is thus introduced in the minutes, "Motion was made and carried that a sewing-circle be organized to make articles for which ready sale might be found." This sewing circle, though conducted by the missionary society, extended an invitation to the ladies of the entire church to assist. Many responded, and this circle has continued without interruption until now. The women have given ungrudgingly of their time and skill, and thus largely increased the funds available for the distinctive work of the missionary society. A number of highly successful bazaars and suppers have been conducted in the past, and the society has made for itself quite an enviable reputation on account of the excellency of these affairs. At the present time the sewing-circle confines itself almost entirely to quilting, and work is brought to it from all parts of Canton.

From the beginning also, congregational visiting has been emphasized, until now, at every meeting, from forty to one hundred vivits are reported. In case of sickness, flowers are carried to the afflicted ones.

A new era in the work of the society dawned, when the members got the vision of the larger work which could be done if they were affiliated with the Woman's Missionary organizations of the Reformed Church. As St. John's Classis had no woman's organization, the society decided in September, 1907, "To join the Tuscarawas Classical Society until such a time



that St. John's Classis might be organized." In order to avoid the complications which might follow connection with another classis and synod, the matter was reconsidered at the next meeting, and the decision was reached to first make the effort to organize a Woman's Missionary Society of St. John's Classis.

Rev. Bolliger, in the name of the society, overtured St. John's Classis for permission to organize a classical woman's society, and also to appoint a committee to carry the project to completion. Both requests were granted, and Rev. Bolliger was made chairman of the committee requested. The other members of the committee were Rev. A. Zimmerman and Elder John Kaderle. After an extended correspondence with pastors and societies, delegates from seven societies met in Canton, April 23, 1908, as guests of the Canton society. Five of these societies had already voted in favor of entering a classical organization. The committee appointed by Classis had worked out a suitable constitution, which was adopted, and a temporary organization was effected, with Mrs. Catherine Dahinden, the president of the Canton society, as temporary president. At the annual meeting of St. John's Classis during the following June, the proposed constitution was adopted, and immediately afterwards the delegates of the missionary societies met, effected a permanent organization, and started in to do systematic missionary work.

The Canton society at the beginning assumed the full apportionment for only forty members; but by the end of two years the work had won such a place for itself that the entire membership has been reported ever since.

The Woman's Missionary Society of St. John's Classis now includes thirteen organizations with 320 members. Of this number the Canton societies furnish 125. The organization of the Classical society was due entirely to the efforts put forth by the Canton society and its pastor; and the continued highly successful development of the woman's missionary interests in the Classis, has been largely dependent upon the earnest work of the Canton members. They have great rea-





THE PRESIDENTS OF THE WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY  
*Mrs. Elizabeth Bolliger, Mrs. Eva Thomas, Mrs. Louise Newacheck, Mrs. Etta Kitson, Mrs. Emma Whaler*

son to look with maternal pride upon the vigorous robustness of their numerous offspring.

No small measure of the success attained by the Canton Society has come from the programs presented. From the beginning, each meeting was planned to give some definite missionary information and inspiration. During the last years the text-books as used by the Woman's Missionary Societies throughout the land, have been studied by the members who are most interested, and the various chapters are used as the basis for the monthly programs.

Two auxiliary missionary societies were called into existence during April, 1916. The "business girls" of the congregation were practically barred from the Woman's Society by the fact that all meetings were held during the afternoon. To enlist these young women in the work, the "Auxiliary Woman's Missionary Society" was organized. The present officers are, Mrs. Martha Bachtel, president; Miss Edith Daberko, secretary; Miss Hazel Troutner, treasurer. The membership numbers twenty.

The younger girls were organized into the "Emma Ziemer Missionary Circle," which now has twenty-four members. The officers are: Miss L. Aurelia Bolliger, president; Miss Blanche Hohler, secretary; Mrs. Beulah Mock, treasurer.

The total receipts of the older society since its organization have been \$2536. The entire amount was given for missionary, benevolent, and congregational purposes.

The present officers are: Mrs. Jennie Mack, president; Mrs. Clara Trachsel, secretary; Mrs. Winifred Walker, treasurer.

In the fifteen years of its existence the missionary society has had only seven presidents, namely, Mrs. Clara Weiss, Mrs. Emma Whaler, Mrs. Catherine Dahinden, Mrs. Etta Kitson, Mrs. Elizabeth Bolliger, Mrs. Eva Thomas and Mrs. Jennie Mack.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### EXPANSION

THE Reformed churches of Canton have caught a vision of the possibilities before the church in a growing, industrial community such as ours, and are determined to push the organization of other congregations in the unoccupied portions of Canton.

The beginning was made in 1914 by the purchase of two lots on the corner of Arlington Ave. and Third St. N.W. Each one of the existing congregations made itself responsible for a certain proportion of the purchase price; namely: Trinity, eight-thirteenths; First, four-thirteenths; Grace, one-thirteenth. In 1916, a third lot was purchased, giving a plot 80 by 140 feet with an annex of 40 by 40 feet. The total cost of the site was \$3350, which is being paid off in monthly installments. Including the interest, sewer assessments, taxes and other incidentals the lots will cost the three older churches \$3700.

At the petition of the Canton churches, the Board of Home Missions of the Reformed Church commissioned Rev. O. P. Foust as missionary. He began his work on September 1, 1916. On October 29, a congregation was organized with forty-eight members. On January 20, 1917, the congregation was incorporated with the name "Lowell Reformed Church." Immediately after the incorporation, the lots were deeded to the new organization without any encumbrance whatsoever.

The Lowell congregation is planning to build the Sunday School unit of its own church home during the summer of 1917. Owing to the great increase in the price of labor and building material, this part of the building will cost about \$14,000. The church auditorium will not be built until the growth of the congregation makes it necessary. The erection of the Sunday School unit at the present time was made possible only by the loan of \$7500 made by the Home Mission Board. The Lowell





THE LOWELL REFORMED CHURCH WHEN COMPLETED

*The Sunday school unit will be built during the summer of 1917*



Church on Easter Sunday increased its membership to one hundred.

A site for a fifth Reformed church has already been purchased by Tuscarawas Classis, on Twenty-third St. N.W. for \$2100. It is expected that in a year or two at the most, a building can be erected there.

A Sunday School has also been conducted for two years on Maple Ave. N.E. The school, which is under the fostering care of the Trinity Church, has an enrollment of about one hundred. The prospects for securing suitable lots, and putting up a temporary building for more efficient work, are very promising.

Stark County a few years ago, when a census of the churches was taken, had more Reformed congregations than any other denomination. Reformed people have been pouring into Canton from these congregations, and many of these have been lost to our church, because the work of planting missions had been so long neglected. Now, however, our people are awakening to their duty. The churches already established have resolved to dismiss—without any effort to hold them—anyone who desires to unite with one of the mission churches. This policy, followed out for a few years, will make it possible to plant a Reformed church in every part of Canton that is now without a place of worship. This Canton missionary work will greatly bless the older congregations, will extend the borders of our Reformed Zion, and build up the kingdom of our God. "To Him be all the glory, forever and forever."



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